



The Baptist Record

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"Working Man" takes pride in a job well done . . .

By Sam Gore

Note: The "Working Man" sculpture by Sam Gore was unveiled on April 20, 1991 at the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Museum in Jackson. At that time, the sculptor delivered the following message. Gore is head of the Art Department for Mississippi College.

I have not portrayed a particular person but rather a personality, a type of person characteristic of the cultural past, represented by the museum collection itself. In the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Museum, its collection, and its environment, I do not see substance as much as I see community of people bound together by a set of values. As a sculptor I have reported in 1000 pounds of bronze art form what I have seen and felt.

The type of person whom I have portrayed is one patiently committed to hard work, who takes pride in a job well-done. He is honest, his handshake being as good and as reassuring as a written contract. The ring on his finger signifies that he is not alone, that his family is typical of a day when the family was the strongest unit of society. He accepts a fully responsible role in life with a commitment to the happiness and well-being of others. In the hope and expectation following the labor of planting, know-

ing his own limitation, he looks to a higher power. A plumbline of righteousness, a knowledge of right and wrong, is his guide to a clear conscience and undisturbed sleep. He knows justice and mercy, joy and sorrow, and can walk in another man's shoes.

With this spirit, a country doctor took two children into his own home after both parents died in a flu epidemic. In like spirit, a small-town banker refused to foreclose on the farms of his neighbors during the Depression of the 1930s, with faith in their word and what was known as a good name. A family lost all its earthly goods in a fire, yet found wealth in the warm devotion of friends who shared their loss and helped them to rebuild. Sickness did not destine a person's crops to rot in the fields, as such bonds of friendship between "working men" and their families were their best insurance. Bearing one another's burdens and expressing gratitude were among their most notable attributes.

The "working man" is the role model of his age, the kind of person looked up to by children who want to be like him, and to whom they always speak with a respectful, "Yes, sir" and "No, sir." He exemplifies the higher

values of his time.

Both the "working man" and his dog, which lies in complete repose at the feet of his master, symbolize a state of devotion. The "working man's" exaggerated anatomical bulk symbolizes an inner strength characteristic of the people of his day. We have changed, or "shifted gears," from the technology of the past to that of the present — but we search our souls for the assurance that we have brought the values of the "working man" with us. Of his generation someone will one day write, "... and there were giants in those days."

From early childhood I dug clay from the road banks of Mississippi and tried to create art forms. Teachers who knew how to inspire and who tried to see something unique in each individual, gave me a pat on the back and encouraged me. I am now the longest tenured professor (39 years) at Mississippi College, the oldest college in Mississippi. There are many talented young people in the crossroads communities of Mississippi who need that pat on the back. This state has some of the best art educators anywhere and the fruit of their work in the lives of young talent will attest to what we in our day have passed on to them.

Labor Day: Salute to "Working Man"

"Working Man," sculpted in bronze by Sam Gore of Clinton, was unveiled at the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Museum, Jackson, earlier this year. The statue depicts a laborer reading from the Bible.

Iran tolerates Christianity more than most

By Art Toalston

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Iran tolerates Christianity more than most countries in the Middle East, according to one of its Christian citizens.

Sam Yeghnazar, pastor of the Iranian Christian Fellowship in London, said even converts from Islam don't inherently face persecution in Iran. If a Christian encounters opposition, it usually comes from a relative or in a small town, village, or rural area, Yeghnazar said.

More often, however, a decision to embrace Christianity is accepted.

"In a large country like Iran, with 54 million people, there are all different types of reactions to Christianity," said Yeghnazar during an Aug. 9 visit to the Foreign Mission Board in Richmond.

Yeghnazar retains his Iranian citizenship and often travels back to his homeland. From 1974 to 1986, he was involved in Bible society work in the Philippines, Lebanon, and England. He moved into Iranian ministry five years ago and is pastor of a London congregation which draws about 100 Iranians and other internationals to worship each week.

He played a key role earlier this year in linking Southern Baptists with Iranian Christians in relief efforts among Kurdish refugees.

Yeghnazar helped arrange for Southern Baptists to airlift four field kitchens to Iran and send 12 volunteers to work with a team of 10 Iranian Christians to feed 15,000 Kurds

in a refugee camp in mountainous southwestern Iran.

The Iranian Christians said the volunteers were the first Americans to labor with them since the late Ayatollah Khomeini rose to power in 1979. They were in Iran for just a week, but Yeghnazar said they left "a beautiful testimony" behind. They helped the Iranian Christian team learn to operate a feeding program and left the field kitchens for them to use in future relief efforts in Iran as a visible witness for Christ, Yeghnazar said.

The Iranian relief workers are part of the small evangelical community in Iran of 3,000-plus believers in 25 congregations, half of them in Tehran and most Presbyterian or Assemblies of God.

Many believers come from ancient Armenian or Assyrian churches of the region or from the Muslim community, Yeghnazar said. A few are converts from Judaism or Zoroastrianism (the religion prominent in Persia before Islam).

While Islam is the state religion, Iran also officially recognizes Judaism, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism. The Bahai faith, which began in Iran during the 1800s, has no legal standing and, according to human rights groups, has endured various forms of persecution.

Yeghnazar acknowledged a 55-year-old Assemblies of God pastor was ex-

ecuted by hanging in December 1990 in the northeastern Iranian city of Mashad. Some sources at the time said the execution was part of a harsh round of persecution against Christians, especially converts from Islam.

But Yeghnazar said Muslim extremists orchestrated the execution.

"It was not an action all the people in the city would have approved. Ordinary people — Muslims — were angry at what happened." In Tehran, he added, "I have my doubts that the central government would have endorsed such an action."

"Many Iranians have become Christians," Yeghnazar said, "and they have not suffered the same fate."

Iranian believers "would have no hesitation to tell you that they are Christians, even in public," he added. "They would witness with courage."

Stereotypes don't fit Iran, Yeghnazar said. When, for example, an Iranian official employs the Ayatollah Khomeini's rhetoric against the United States as the "Great Satan," it's a statement against the U.S. political system, not individual Americans, Yeghnazar said.

Even though Iran has battled with Kurdish freedom fighters in the past, he recounted, posters in Iran to raise funds for Kurdish refugees cited Persian poetry that states, "Humankind are the members of one another, as in the creation they were formed from the same substance."

Iran has a lengthy biblical heritage, Yeghnazar said. In the New Testament, people from ancient lands now part of Iran are listed first among those present on the day of Pentecost: Parthians, Medes, and Elamites.

And in the Old Testament, Esther, a Jewish orphan, became queen of Persia. A Persian king, Cyrus, liberated Jews from Babylonian captivity, and Persian authorities enabled Nehemiah to organize the rebuilding of the Jerusalem wall.

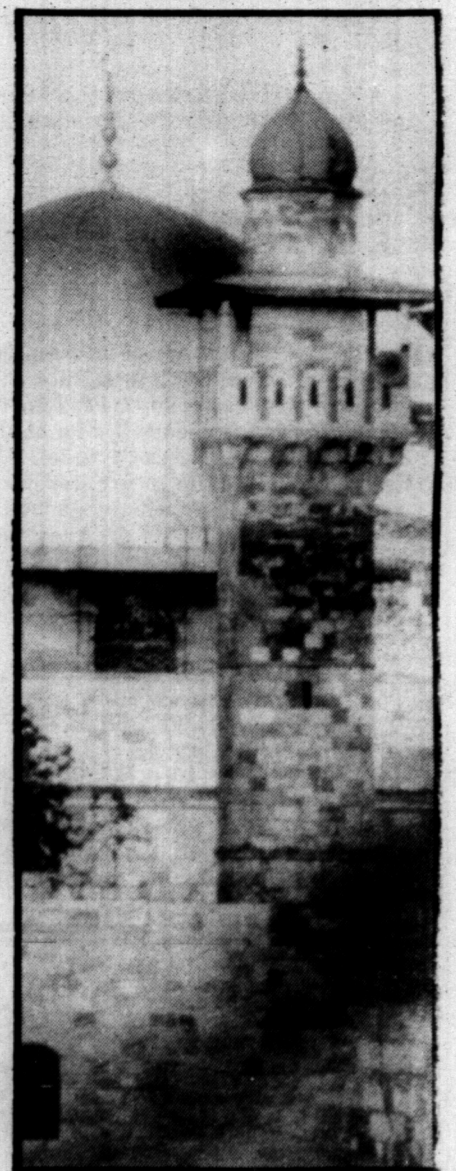
In Chapter 49 of the book of Jeremiah, the prophet recounts God's intention to inflict calamity on Elam for sinfulness. But the chapter closes with the assurance, "I will restore the fortunes of Elam in days to come."

"A lot in Scripture talks favorably about Iran," Yeghnazar said, "and we trust that God, whose promises are all true, will look favorably toward Iran again."

Up to 7 million Iranians live outside Iran, Yeghnazar said, and many are disillusioned by the Islamic revolution sparked by the Ayatollah Khomeini and thus open to Christianity. Iranian Christian fellowships have formed in such countries as Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, and Singapore. A half dozen fellowships are in California, where about 750,000 Iranians live.

"It wouldn't be very strange to meet Iranian believers in any country in the world," Yeghnazar noted.

Toalston writes for FMB.



EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

Do we really need it?

Recently the new Baptist Center for Ethics (BCE) was organized, funded, and elected Robert Parham to be director. Parham, with an earned doctorate in ethics, had been employed by the Christian Life Commission (CLC) for the six previous years.

An attractive group of volunteer workers from seminaries, colleges, and churches will assist Parham. Created by the leaders of the moderate Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, doubtless it will soon be an established part of it.

Southern Baptists have had the CLC-Christian Life Commission for many years. Apparently it was adequate until the Convention controversy. Now we have two. The CLC is supposed to assist Southern Baptists in understanding the moral demands of the Christian faith and how to apply Christian principles to moral and social problems. This includes family life, citizenship, race relations, world hunger, etc.

Lately a new set of concerns has surfaced: workaholics, alcoholism, gambling, abortion, drug addiction, pornography, and domestic abuse. No sooner do we begin to analyze this than a more contemporaneous group arises: genetic engineering, AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, harvesting human organs and tissues, artificial insemination (donor or husband), and homosexuality.

We only pause to catch our breath. We have to decide how we feel about suicide prevention, teen pregnancy, bio-medic ethics, poverty, homelessness, aging, refugees who bring their culture and religions when they come, civil disobedience, not to mention vast areas of energy, conservation, inflation, and a dozen others that are closing in on us.

What does the Bible teach on all these issues? What do we teach the next generation? How am I supposed to feel and think about all of this? Paul Jones and his staff in the Christian Ac-

tion office are busy trying to get this information out to church leaders. However, it has all come with such suddenness and intensity that the Christian church is dazed.

The moderate leaders have declared the CLC only dealt with a portion of the issues and a wider scope of operation is needed. So now we have CLC and BCE seeking to influence the faithful. Maybe we need both of them. Perhaps two is not enough. Would not three or four be better? Is there the shadow of personality conflicts in the background? Must we pay for two offices, two executive directors, in order to get complete coverage?

Do we need two "Cooperative Programs?"

Do we need two news agencies?

Do we need two or more publishing houses?

Is there a need for all the new seminaries?

Could we not think of consolidation rather than proliferation? Baptists are never going to agree hook, line, and sinker on all these social issues. We do need good solid information to make good solid decisions. Surely one agency could provide this.

The idea of involving more people from colleges and seminaries is excellent. CLC could do with a wider base of collecting and sifting information.

Daniel Vestal, formerly of Atlanta, now of Houston, in a message on "What is the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship?" declared it to be (1) a fellowship, not a separate convention or denomination; (2) this fellowship is Baptist, with the conviction that each individual is a priest unto God, able to know and do the will of God; and (3) this fellowship is cooperative in an environment of integrity, freedom, and servanthood.

Meanwhile, Richard Land, director of CLC, says, "If other Baptists feel the need to do something in the area

of ethics with their time and money, that is their right and their business."

He noted that CLC is the agency which the SBC has assigned the task of speaking to ethical issues.

W. C. Fields, chairman of BCE advisory council, says he does not see the center as "an anti-CLC body." Bill Sherman, Nashville pastor, said, "We felt there was a vacuum concerning New Testament ethics in Baptist ranks," and then implied the CLC had confined its attention to a narrow list of pet issues.

The BCE budget for 1992 is listed as \$100,000, the money coming from individuals, churches, and organizations. There is the tendency for more, much more, to be needed in any new agency. The CLC budget is \$1,262,836, all coming through the Cooperative Program. Meanwhile, Land of CLC, firing a salvo of finality, said, "I don't think there is any confusion over who speaks for the majority of Southern Baptists on ethics in the year of our Lord 1991. It is not the Baptist Joint Committee. It is not the Baptist Center for Ethics. It is the Christian Life Commission..."

So, amidst all the charges and counter-charges, we have two agencies speaking for Baptists on ethics and both have equal opportunity to be right or wrong. The ethics of having to have two ethics agencies disturbs me. The arguments provided by both agencies are not likely to improve the veracity of either one. Flaws, defects, personality conflicts, and convention controversy intertwined makes a very weak rope... for which Southern Baptists will be depending for our informed viewpoint on vital issues. This turf war will be expensive and naught is likely to be settled.

Is there not a way the CLC can broaden its base to include new issues and utilize experts from colleges and seminaries? Can the BCE forego the origin of a new agency and be cooperative with the one we have?

"I'M LOOKING FOR A NICE RELIGION — POLITE, CIVIL, AND INOFFENSIVE. AND FOR A PASTOR WITH A GIFT FOR OBFUSCATION."



The road map

It had to happen sooner or later if for no other reason than to provide an illustration. In San Mateo, Calif., according to Readers' Digest, an enterprising company ordered 50,000 road maps of the area showing people how to find their store. You guessed it. The delivery truck became lost and the driver had to call the store for instructions. Meanwhile, 50,000 maps in arm's reach went unused.

However, the truck driver knew he was lost. He knew someone had the answer and got in touch. Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh to the Father except by me." Most homes have a Bible, the world's best road map. Meanwhile, there is frustration, restlessness, and ignorance, and all the time road maps are readily available. — GH

Ethicist Ben Mitchell chosen for CLC post

By Louis Moore

NASHVILLE (BP) — Christian ethicist Carl Benjamin Mitchell, 36, will be nominated for the position of director of biomedical and life issues for the Christian Life Commission. CLC Executive Director Richard D. Land will present Mitchell to the CLC's board of trustees for approval at the board meeting Sept. 10-12 in Nashville. In addition to biomedical ethics, Mitchell's job responsibilities will include all those currently assigned to Robert M. Parham, who resigned from the CLC effective Sept. 1 to head the new Baptist Center for Ethics. Parham was the CLC's director of hunger and drug concerns and race relations. The BCE, which begins operation in September, is aligned with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, an organization of moderates who are unhappy with the current conservative leadership of the convention.

Medical ethical issues include genetic engineering, artificial insemination, fetal tissue experimenta-

tion and transplantation, abortion, the allocation of medical resources, organ donation/transplantation, AIDS, informed consent, medical confidentiality, euthanasia, advanced directives and living wills, death and dying, and drug testing.

He holds a bachelor of science degree from Mississippi State University and a master of divinity degree from Southwestern Seminary. He is enrolled this summer in the hospital practicum in clinical medical ethics at the University of Tennessee Medical Center at Knoxville.

"It is my conviction that every informed Christian is competent to do ethics. We have the Bible and the Holy Spirit. What we need is accurate and relevant information. That's where I want to be of help."

"I want to help equip believers to make ethical decisions and influence public policy in an increasingly pluralistic society," Mitchell said about his nomination.

Moore writes for CLC.

Thanks to mothers who choose life

Note: As the mother of an adopted daughter, I would like to submit the enclosed as a way of saying thanks to all mothers that choose life for their babies. When they can't meet the needs of that baby a greater love allows them to let that baby go into a home where the needs are met and much love is given.

(This letter is in response to Hillary Haik's story, "My Anti-Abortion Testimony.")

I watched our infant daughter sleeping so peacefully and my heart overflowed with joy and I said, "Thank you."

I watched those little wobbly legs, determined to stand, and then one step at a time get stronger and stronger taking her places she had never ventured before and I said, "Thank you."

I watched her looking somewhat puzzled as our pediatrician examined her, checking heart, eyes, ears, height, and weight and I knew God had "fearfully and wonderfully" made her and I said, "Thank you."

I watched her daddy run alongside as she tried to balance on her new bike. There were giggles interspersed with screams until she conquered the art of riding alone and I said, "Thank you."

I watched her that first day of kindergarten and thought it impossible for her to be in school already. There she sat so brave and there I stood so scared and I said, "Thank you."

I watched all her accomplishments, shared in her disappointments, laughed in time of joy; and wiped away

tears of heartache.

I watched her grow from a tiny baby to a lovely young lady I've loved, nourished, and directed her as best I've known how.

Thank you for loving her enough to give her life so she could experience all that she has and will. Thank you for allowing me to introduce her to the Lord Jesus, into whose family she has now been adopted as well.

I thank my Lord for extending his marvelous grace to us that by your decision to say yes to life you have made our lives very rich and full of joy.

Philippians 1:3 says it all: "I thank my God everytime I remember you."

God bless you,
Her Other Mother

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Baptist volunteers get 'green light' to travel to Soviet Union Sept. 2.

By Susan Todd Doyle

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Word came Aug. 21 from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to a team of young adult volunteers that their Sept. 2-10 trip to the Soviet Union has been confirmed. Debra Brunt of Corinth, Miss. is among the volunteers. Team members waited anxiously from the beginning of the attempted coup to oust Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to know whether their trip would happen as planned.

The team has been preparing for months to distribute 70,000 Russian language New Testaments in three cities in the Soviet Union, as well as

to conduct a variety of other ministries and worship services in each city at the invitation of Soviet Baptists.

"We see this as an opportune time (for the trip) and not inopportune," said Tom Warrington, associate area director for Europe for the Foreign Mission Board. Warrington was one of the FMB staff members involved in making the final decision for the group.

"We have been in touch with our missionaries in Moscow and foresee no problems," he said. "People there have freedom to move about within

the city. We see no danger at this point."

The group planning to depart for the Soviet Union Sept. 2 includes about 30 young adult volunteers enlisted by Woman's Missionary Union, based in Birmingham, and the Brotherhood Commission, based in Memphis, Tenn. WMU and Brotherhood are the missions arms of the Southern Baptist Convention, supporting mission education, mission support, mission action, and personal witnessing efforts in Southern Baptist churches.

(See "GREEN LIGHT" on page 9)

BSSB inaugurates Draper, approves record budget

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (ABP) — James T. Draper Jr. was inaugurated Aug. 20 as the eighth president in the Sunday School Board's 100 years of history.

The ceremony for Draper was sandwiched between two days of meetings as the board's trustees also met for their regular business sessions. A 1991-92 budget was approved, topping \$200 million for the first time.

The new president of the Southern Baptist Convention's publishing and education arm and his family were

welcomed in a two-hour celebration in the board's Van Ness Auditorium. At least 1,500 employees and other interested people attended.

Draper succeeds Lloyd Elder, who was forced to retire after seven years as president in a dispute with SSB trustees. Elder will remain in Nashville in a teaching capacity with Belmont College.

During his inauguration message, Draper said the Sunday School Board will remain "true to the Bible." He said that "thus saith the Lord" ends all controversy.

The former Texas Baptist pastor quoted from J. M. Frost, the board's first chief executive, in an introduction to the book "Baptist Why or Why Not," published by the board in 1900.

Noting the board's heritage, Draper quoted Frost's words: "We accept the Scriptures as an all-sufficient and infallible rule of faith and practice and insist upon the absolute inerrancy and sole authority of the Word of God. We recognize at this point no room for division, either of practice or belief, or even sentiment. More and more we must come to feel as the deepest and mightiest power of our conviction that a 'thus saith the Lord' ends all controversy."

Of Frost's use of the word "inerrancy," Draper quipped, "that 'new' word that people say we never had around here before."

"That's our history," Draper added. "That's where we have been. We'll not deviate from that. That's where the track has been going all this time."

Later, in their business session, trustees voted to put Frost's quote on

(See BSSB on page 4)



NASHVILLE — Joy Lang, who has been employed at the Houston Baptist Book Store for 45 years, the longest tenure of any Sunday School Board employee, presented James T. Draper Jr. a Bible during his inauguration as the eighth president of the board. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)



NASHVILLE — Bobby Welch, left, vice chairman of the Sunday School Board's presidential search committee and pastor of First Church, Daytona Beach, Fla., presented Carol Ann and James T. Draper Jr. to approximately 1,500 people attending Draper's inauguration ceremonies. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

The Second Front Page

The Baptist Record

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Convention Board approves \$21,588,435 budget for '92

By Tim Nicholas

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board Monday approved a 1992 Cooperative Program budget of \$21,588,435.

The board, meeting at the Baptist Building in Jackson, approved the budget with only two negative votes after unanimous recommendation of both the budget committee and the board's Executive Committee.

The only area of controversy concerning the budget came in discussion of a traditional increase in percentage of budget going to SBC causes outside the state. Since 1984, the convention has voted to increase the SBC causes portion of the Cooperative Program budget by one half of a percentage point.

Had the increase been voted, the percentage going to SBC causes would have been 37.5 percent, reducing the Mississippi portion to 62.5 percent. However, both the SBC portion and the MBC portion of the budget received dollar increases.

The board voted to keep the per-

centage the same as last year — 63 percent to Mississippi causes and 37 percent to SBC causes outside the state. According to budget chairman Larry Otis of Tupelo, this means that of the total budget increase which totals \$638,473, the additional SBC portion will be \$236,235 and the Mississippi causes portion would be \$402,238.

The change from the 1984-initiated tradition was recommended by the budget committee because last year for the first time more of the budget increase went to SBC causes than stayed in Mississippi.

"We are not cutting our gifts to the SBC," said Otis in the Executive Committee meeting prior to the board session. "If we continue in this track, next year we would be asking to cut back on programs," said Otis, and perhaps employees, too, he added.

The budget committee last year had only recommended a one-quarter percent increase to the SBC portion of the budget, but reneged prior to the convention and restored the full half-

percent. Otis stated the committee would not back up again this year.

He noted that the 1991 budget includes no new monies for MBCB programs, only raises for staffers. That would be four percent for cost of living and up to two percent for merit raises.

The recommendation adopted by the 1984 convention asked future conventions to add a half percent to the portion of Cooperative Program gifts going to SBC causes.

At that time, during a promotion called Planned Growth in Giving, convention leaders believed that churches would continue to increase in percentage giving to the Cooperative Program. That has not turned out to be so.

David Michel, stewardship director, told the Executive Committee that the portion of undesignated Mississippi church gifts channeled through the Cooperative Program has shrunk from 12 percent to 11.4 percent.

(See BOARD on page 7)

N.C. church hears both sides

By Christopher Quinn

and fielded questions Aug. 21.

At stake is \$120,000 that the church gives to Baptist missions each year. The Southern Baptist Convention funds missions through the Cooperative Program. In May the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship launched three alternate-funding plans that withhold money from some SBC causes and fund new Fellowship-sponsored ventures.

Thomas Melzoni Jr., pastor of First Church, said the 1,800-member congregation has placed its missions offerings in escrow until it decides which group to give them to.

"I believe very strongly in telling people everything and trusting them to make decisions," he said before the meeting with Chapman.

The current dispute over funding grew from the election of fundamental-conservative leaders to the Southern Baptist Convention beginning in 1979. Since then, those leaders have forced many moderate-conservative Baptist leaders into early retirement and have fired others.

The moderate-conservatives have charged that the fundamental-conservatives are excluding them from participation in the denomination.

The fundamental-conservatives counter that they are bringing the denomination back to its conservative roots.

Melzoni said that even though the leaders of both factions have battled

(See N.C. on page 4)

Baptist leaders lay groundwork for deaf ministry in Soviet Union

By Sarah Zimmerman

ATLANTA (BP) — Vladimir Boev, superintendent of a union of 40 churches in the Soviet Union, was in the United States in August to study deaf ministries. His trip came three months after Carter Bearden, Home Mission Board consultant for the deaf, spent three weeks in the U.S.S.R.

"Pray that our people don't seek silver and gold. Pray that they will seek the church and seek the Word of God," Boev said. "When many people repent in our country, then God will bless."

When Bearden was in the Soviet Union, he traveled to Moscow, Leningrad, Tver, and Voronish. He preached in churches and distributed copies of the Gospel of John in schools for the deaf, businesses that employ deaf people, and theaters with deaf performers.

The purpose of his trip, Bearden said, was to "help the Baptist Union share the gospel with the deaf and to create an awareness of deaf people among the churches we visited." Bearden said there are about 200,000

deaf people in the Soviet Union.

One stop on Bearden's tour was the Leningrad Society of the Deaf. In response, 150 to 200 deaf people attended their first Baptist worship service that afternoon. Bearden said several decisions were made during the invitation.

Next year, a trip to the Soviet Union is planned for deaf leaders from the United States to train Russian pastors and interpreters to begin deaf work in their churches and other areas.

Zimmerman writes for HMB.

SSB

From page 3

a plaque to be placed in the board's Nashville offices.

Participants on the inauguration program represented the Southern Baptist Convention, state Baptist conventions, churches, directors of missions, and employees. Other speakers included SBC president Morris Chapman, pastor of First Church of Wichita Falls, Texas, and former president Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Church in Memphis, Tenn.

Draper, 55, was elected July 18 and assumed the presidency Aug. 17 after 16 years as pastor of First Church of Euless, Texas.

Other former SBC presidents attending the service were Atlanta evangelist Bailey Smith and Franklin Paschall, former pastor of First Church of Nashville.

Two of the three living former board presidents, Elder and James Sullivan, attended the inauguration. Retired board president Grady Cothen, who now lives in Coral Springs, Fla., sent a letter of greeting.

Draper pledged to emphasize four dimensions of leadership — spiritual, business, organization, and people. He said he will represent the board to its constituencies — churches, associations, state conventions, and SBC agencies and institutions. He praised the "strong structure" of the board and its "wonderful foundation and success we have to build on."

Besides Chapman and Rogers, others participating on the program were D. L. Lowrie, Tennessee Baptist Convention executive director; Luther Dyer, retired director of missions from Lakeland, Fla.; board chairman Bill Anderson of Clearwater, Fla.; Bobby Welch, vice chairman of the presidential search committee, Daytona Beach, Fla.; Leland Cunningham, 35-year SSB employee; Frank Palmer, trustee from Redmond, Ore.; and Joy Lang, 45-year

employee of the Baptist Book Store in Houston.

The new president's brother, Charles Draper, a pastor from Honolulu, Hawaii, closed the program with prayer. Music was provided by the choir and orchestra of Two Rivers Church, Nashville.

During the business sessions, it was noted that the board has sold a million copies of the new Baptist Hymnal. Those sales amounting to more than \$6 million have boosted the year-to-date financial report above budget.

Trustees approved a \$205.3 million budget for 1991-92, \$14.8 million above the current operating budget. It marks the first time an SBC agency has passed a \$200 million budget.

Trustees also voted to eliminate a previously approved 5% price increase for dated church literature and instead to initiate a 6% shipping-and-handling charge on all retail orders, beginning in January 1992.

The mid-year financial report revealed that "while it appears likely that the SSB will generate the highest total revenue in history, this does not translate to the best financial year in its history."

The report said that funds provided from operations "are not likely to approach the level achieved in fiscal year 1983-84."

Reports were given on product sales of more than 11,000 copies of the first volume of the New American Commentary released in June, and more than 16,000 copies of the Holman Bible Dictionary. The second commentary volume is scheduled for a September release.

Harry Piland, director of the Sunday School division, reported that new "Breakthrough" Sunday School literature is being shipped to churches for the fall quarter and that plans to train "Breakthrough" consultants across the country are on schedule.

He also was an associate of W.A. Criswell, pastor of First Church of Dallas and a leader in the fundamental-conservative ranks.

"I was very much involved in the 1979 and '80 effort (to gain control of the SBC) because I did believe changes needed to be made," Melzoni said.

"But I feel like the pendulum has swung too far. We are seeing threats cut and good people excluded from service, and that bothers me."

Melzoni said he decided to educate his congregation by inviting leaders from the disparate groups and allowing them to present their sides.

Members of other congregations heard about the meetings and attend-

ed as well.

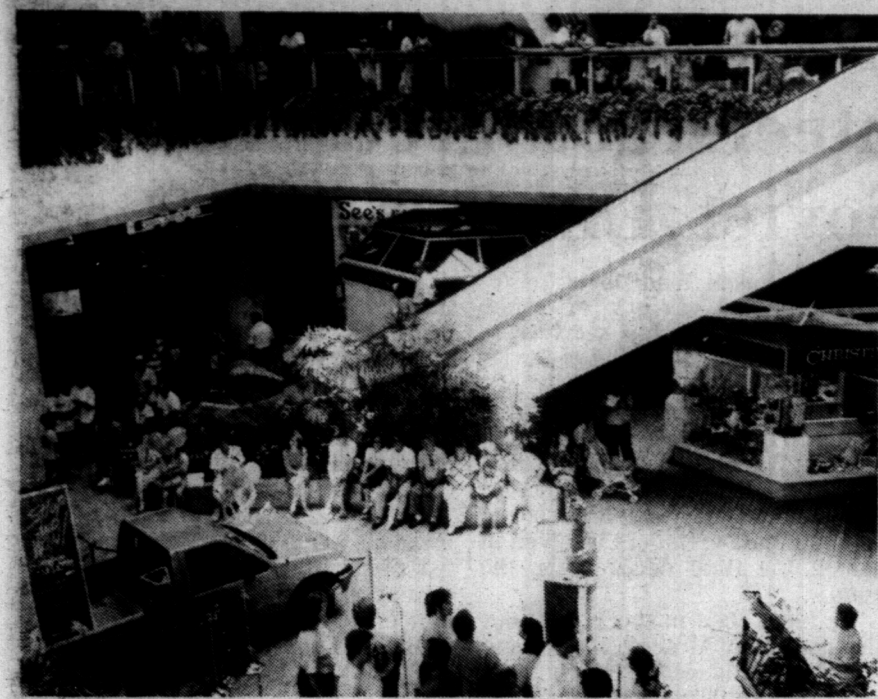
Eric McNeely, a lifelong member of First Church, said: "A lot of people are confused. Hopefully, these two nights will help settle this issue."

Timothy Deaton, a member of another nearby church, said: "A lot of churches are really undecided about what to do. But this will probably make the difference in helping First Church to decide."

As Chapman fielded questions about his leadership and beliefs, some heads nodded in assent. Many others shook side to side.

The church members will decide in 30 days where to send their money.

Quinn is a reporter for the Winston-Salem (N.C.) JOURNAL.



Mississippians in Hawaii

PEARL CITY, Hawaii — "One Voice" (foreground), a singing group directed by Graham Smith, state music director for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, presented a concert of evangelistic music at Pearlridge Shopping Center in Pearl City, Hawaii, as a part of the Musicians on Mission volunteer project. The group sang in churches, health care centers, and shopping malls. (BP photo by Charles Willis)

Musicians on Mission have power for victory

By Charles Willis

HONOLULU (BP) — Christian musicians seeking to return power to "godly things" have that ability through their musical skills, a Southern Baptist professor told mainland U.S. and Hawaii Baptists during the 15th and final Musicians on Mission workshop, Aug. 9-11.

William L. Hendricks, professor of Christian theology at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., spoke to 150 workshop registrants at Olivet Baptist Church in Honolulu.

Included in the workshop were 69 mainland U.S. Southern Baptists who volunteered to attend the workshop at their own expense and to work afterward in Hawaii Baptist churches requesting musical training.

"The demonic have torn the power from godly things," Hendricks said. "The world sings the songs of lust and greed and hate. There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every soul, and the world tries to fill it with lust, money, and alcohol that tourists bring to this place."

Jim L. Harvey, director of the church development division of the Hawaii Baptist Convention, agreed the music for which the islands are famous is not Christian music. The involvement of volunteers to strengthen church music programs in Hawaii provided "enhancement of our worship and personal inspirational help."

"We're very concerned about training more people in the congregation in using the hymnal in singing and personal devotional life," Harvey continued. "We want to help the churches become more attractive to outsiders

with better worship services and better music."

The efforts of 30 individuals and two singing groups through Musicians on Mission has been "helpful and very intense for us," Harvey said. "What we hope is that we can take what we have learned and extend it over several years in music training and music leadership."

"We like the mix of participation with people from the mainland, rather than their doing it all for us. This will be remembered forever."

"We've known we have the best (Southern Baptist) materials and leadership. It just helps us to meet some of them personally."

The 150 workshop participants came from 10 mainland states including Mississippi, and the islands of Oahu, Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii.

The workshop and mission project concluded a 6-year project sponsored by the Sunday School Board's Church Music Department. Since the first workshop and volunteer effort in 1985, 1,400 volunteers have served in 620 churches in California, Kansas, Nebraska, Maryland, Indiana, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, Ohio, Oregon, Colorado, Pennsylvania, Arizona, and Hawaii.

In Hawaii, volunteers led choir clinics, provided sound equipment advice, and helped local leaders with congregational singing needs. They also offered keyboard help, instrumental training, worship planning guidance, and solo and ensemble improvements.

Willis writes for BSSB.

Clower will nominate Moody

Jerry Clower of Grand Ole Opry fame has announced his intention to nominate Jess Moody for president of the Southern Baptist Convention. Clower made the statement while visiting the Baptist Building in Jackson.

Citing the need to get someone outside the South, Clower said Moody, pastor of Shepherd Hills Church, Hollywood, would be a natural, and that Moody could weld the Convention together.

Clower said he has known Jess Moody since 1956, and has requested to be permitted to nominate him at the Indianapolis Convention next June.

An active Baptist layman from Yazoo City, Clower has long advocated more harmony and less bickering within the Convention. He calls for Convention leaders to "get together, pray together, and then together we can press on in the Lord's work."

N.C.

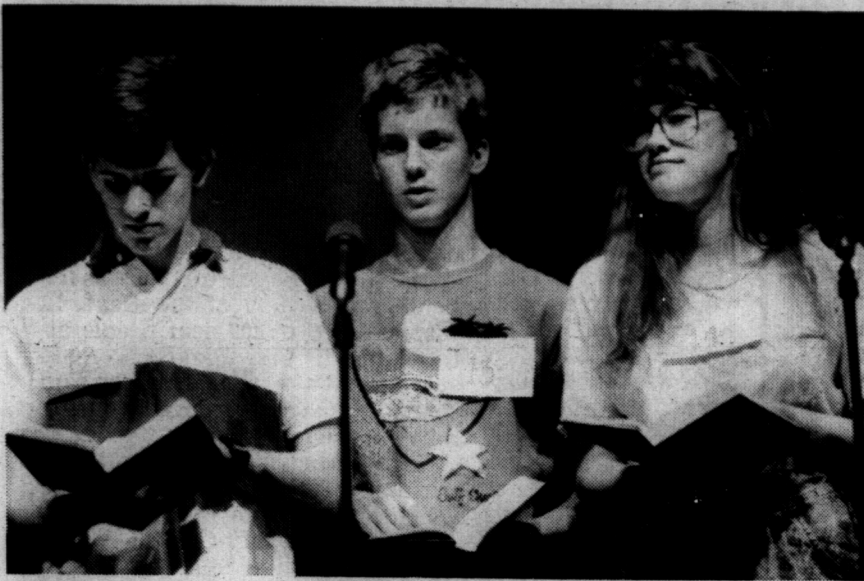
From page 3

each other vociferously at national conventions, the people filling the pews have been largely uninvolved.

However, when disgruntled moderate-conservatives formed the Fellowship in late 1990, laymen began to take notice.

"It's a very important time for our church and all Southern Baptist churches to determine where to channel our funds," Melzoni said.

Melzoni, who came to Hickory about three months ago, served with Chapman at First Church of Wichita Falls, Texas, for three years.



Bible drill winner goes to Ridgecrest

RIDGECREST, N.C. — Chris Wallace, center, of Rocky Creek Church in Lucedale, participated in a Youth Bible Drill demonstration recently at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Conference Center, where he was invited to attend Discipleship Training Week sponsored by the Sunday School Board. Wallace was the state Bible drill winner from Mississippi. At left is Keith Sheritan, of Aloma Baptist Church in Winter Springs, Fla., and at right is Bridget Diggs of Southside Baptist Church in Pinson, Tenn. (Photo by Terri Lackey)

Fellowship begins search for executive director

By Sarah Zimmerman

ATLANTA (BP) — The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the moderate group of Southern Baptists organized in May this year, is looking for its first executive director.

In a press release announcing formation of the executive director search committee, John Hewett, moderator of the Fellowship, said, "We are now at the place where we need professional staff to support and implement the actions of the Fellowship."

"We are looking for a free and faithful Baptist who shares our vision for the future and can direct the day-to-day operations of this new organization," said Hewett who is pastor of First Church of Asheville, N.C.

James Slatton, pastor of River Road Church in Richmond, Va., is search committee chairman. He said

the committee has not met and he did not want to speak for the group about its plans.

Recommendations for the executive director position can be sent to Slatton at River Road Baptist Church, Ridge and River Road, Richmond, Va. 23229.

In addition to Slatton and Hewett, the committee includes Kirby Godsey, president of Mercer University in Macon, Ga.; Carolyn Cole Busy, youth minister at Lake Shore Church in Waco, Texas; Lavonn Brown, pastor of First Church in Norman, Okla.; Dorothy Sample, former national Woman's Missionary Union president of Flint, Mich.; Walter Shurden, professor of Christianity at Mercer University; and Martha Smith, piano teacher from Gastonia, N.C.

Zimmerman writes for HMB.

Student missions applications drop, field requests increase

By Chip Alford

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP) — A staff member of the Home Mission Board expressed concern during an Aug. 14 Student Conference Forum at Glorieta Conference Center over what he termed a "disturbing" drop in summer missions applications by college students.

According to Van Simmons, associate director of short-term volunteers at the Home Mission Board, the number of HMB-paid student summer missionaries has dropped by more than 200 in the last five years, from 739 in 1986 to 526 for 1991. During the same time period, however, requests for student summer missionaries from the field have increased, he said.

"We did not fill 288 positions this summer for our 8-10 week summer missions program," Simmons said. "That to me is a very disturbing figure and it concerns me."

Factors included: a growing trend toward Baptist Student Unions, state conventions, and local churches organizing and funding their own mission trips separate from the organized missions program; a growing number of students who cannot take summer missions positions because they need to earn more money to pay

increasing tuition costs; and a lack of awareness about mission opportunities among students and student leaders.

Another factor in the decline, panel leaders said, is many students are opting for shorter-term summer mission projects offered by the HMB, FMB, BSUs, and state conventions.

In her report to the group, FMB international services department consultant Karen Park said 17 of 147 foreign missionary requests for spring and summer student missionaries were unfilled in 1991. In addition, 57 of 154 requests for special project summer missionaries were unfilled. Some of those projects, she said, were canceled by state conventions.

Panel leaders also reported:

— Fewer applications for the HMB US-2 program were received in 1991 than ever before.

— Only 46 journeymen were sent out by the FMB this year, less than half the number who went for a two-year appointment the previous year.

— As many as 20 student semester missions positions may not be filled by the HMB because of a lack of applications.

Alford writes for BSSB.

Moscow missionaries witness "three days that shook the world"

By Erich Bridges

MOSCOW (BP) — How does it feel to be in Moscow during what may be the most important days since the 1917 communist revolution?

"It feels kind of amazing to be right here, like you can't really comprehend everything that's going on," admitted Southern Baptist missionary Veda Rae Lozuk in an Aug. 22 telephone interview.

Lozuk and her husband, George, the son of Russian and Polish immigrants to the United States, were Southern Baptists' first missionaries assigned to the Soviet Union. The Lozuks of Fort Worth and Corpus Christi, Texas, arrived in Moscow earlier this year to work with Soviet Baptists, hardly realizing tanks would roll through the streets before summer's end in a failed attempt to overthrow Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and his reforms.

"We asked a friend who was over at our house yesterday, 'Has there ever been a thing like this in the history of Russia?' And he said, 'No, nothing like this, where the people surrounded a leader they loved (Russian President Boris Yeltsin) and wouldn't let the army get to him,'" Lozuk related. "This is a tremendous thing."

The Lozuks joined Russian believers at a small Baptist church Aug. 19, the first full day of the coup attempt, to pray. No one knew exactly what would happen at that moment, but the future looked bleak.

But the Christians praying in that small church weren't afraid.

"They just said, 'Let's worship God,

let's continue,'" Lozuk reported. "They were resigned to what was happening and yet there was a determination — a resignation and determination at the same time, if you can imagine that — on the faces of the people, that they're going on."

Some Russian Baptists joined Russian Orthodox believers and tens of thousands of other citizens outside the Russian parliament building where Boris Yeltsin defied hard-line coup leaders and their tanks, she said.

"All of these 150,000 people just gathered around, and I think it was a tremendous testimony of wanting their self-determination," she said. "They had elected him, and they wanted him to serve."

When the tanks rolled out of Moscow and the people had won the day, "joy and thankfulness to the Lord" broke out among Russian Christians, she added. Her husband, who met with Soviet Baptist leader Gregori Komendant at the Moscow Baptist offices Aug. 22, said the Baptist leadership is "ecstatic" about the triumph of democracy and new opportunities for spreading the gospel. He said they held a prayer meeting of thanksgiving.

The Lozuks also are happy — and relieved. A Russian friend told them one of the first priorities of the coup leaders would have been to "kick all the foreigners out of the country."

The other Southern Baptist missionaries in the Soviet Union, Stephen and Marilyn Haines of Sterling and Leesburg, Va., who arrived in Kiev

Aug. 1, also are safe, the Lozuks said. New missionaries Danny and Libby Panter of Pascagoula and Jackson, Miss., were still scheduled to arrive in Moscow Aug. 22. Fifteen other Southern Baptist aid workers in three Soviet republics also are safe; several were traveling abroad when the takeover attempt unfolded.

"This is the time to thank God," Lozuk declared. "He definitely has his hand on all of this. I was reading the Bible today, and I was thinking . . . he has plans for us here in the country and he has a plan for this whole great nation, really a combination of nations of people."

"I wouldn't be surprised to see a spiritual movement sweep over this country, because people are so hungry and so thirsty for the Word of God and they've been denied the hearing of it for such a very long time," she said. "It's exciting to be a part of it right now. We wouldn't trade places with anyone."

Bridges writes for FMB.

The meaning of the pyramid and the eye above it, on the back of a dollar bill? The pyramid symbolizes the strength of the union of the states which make up our land. The top of the pyramid is unfinished, meaning there is still work to be done to make our system ever better. The eye stands for the all-seeing God, Supreme Builder of the Universe.

"Maximizing Video's Potential In Training" Conferences

SEPTEMBER 16, 1991
Calvary Baptist Church
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SEPTEMBER 17, 1991
Lauderdale Baptist Center
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SEPTEMBER 19, 1991
First Baptist Church
Gulfport, MS
7:00-8:30 p.m.

Conference leader, Chip Turner, is director of Media Services for the Louisiana Baptist Convention, Alexandria, Louisiana, and author of "The Church Video Answerbook."



Turner

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Helping To Bring Mississippi And The World To Jesus

Nurses find miracles, answered prayers among Kurdish refugees

By Shannon T. Simpson

On May 18, 1991, Mike Barnes of Jackson boarded a plane for a trip that would radically change his life. Little did he know that trip would affect the lives of almost 10,000 people on the other side of the world as well.

Barnes left Jackson for a three-week volunteer mission effort among the Kurdish refugees encamped along the Turkish border with Iraq. Clinical coordinator for the Mississippi Baptist Medical Center, and member of First Church, Verona, he was part of a team of five who went to Diyarbakir, Turkey, under auspices of Global Partners of London to administer medical aid to the Kurds.

He was joined by Kaye Wilson of Clinton, member of First Church, Madison, and assistant professor of nursing, Mississippi College, also nursing student liaison for Baptist Nursing Fellowship. To date, Barnes and Wilson are the only two Mississippians to volunteer among the Kurdish people.

Through Baptist Nursing Fellowship, Kaye was contacted by Alvinia Michalec of the Foreign Mission Board. Prerequisites for the trip were that the prospective volunteer have current passport and immunizations. Kaye fit the bill.

When Mike's shift supervisor mentioned the trip while on duty at MBMC, Mike overheard and immediately felt an urge to go.

"All during the Gulf war, I stayed glued to the television," says Mike of his desire to help the Kurds. "At that time, I kept thinking I would have given anything to go over and help those people."

But Mike had never volunteered before, and funds were not available for him, as they were not for Kaye. Each felt urging from the Lord, and volunteered despite the financial obstacle.

Only one day before the order had to be placed for her tickets, Kaye received \$1,600 in less than two hours. Kaye's Sunday School class and even the Presbyterian church in Yazoo City donated funds to make it possible for her to go. Mike received donations from churches all over Mississippi and several anonymous sources; MBMC paid for his plane ticket and his time away from work. With less than 24 hours between his scheduled departure for Turkey and his arrival from a seminar in Boston, he was surprised to find himself so calm about all the unresolved details.

"The Lord worked it all out," says

Kaye. "The United Nations provided many of the supplies; drug companies donated bandages and other needs; when we arrived, we found that among our team, none of our roles was duplicated. Each of us had a different specialty. There was even an engineer from Georgia who didn't know what his purpose was to be, but he ended up directing the clinic, because there was no one there to do it."

Kaye also talked of the miracle God worked when he provided replacements for the clinic only two days before the team was scheduled to leave; no replacement volunteers had been expected at all.

Once at the camp, the two nurses assumed their respective duties — Kaye as OB nurse, and Mike in the outpatient dispensary. Because of the strict code governing male/female relations in Muslim countries, Kaye found a great need for her services.

"The team rented a house, and were surprised to find they could get along without knowing each other prior to the trip."

Though displaced, sick, devastated by grief and war, refugees were found by the mission team to be a gracious people who shared meager meals with the volunteers.

"They were so amazed to be loved," Mike said.

"I told them that I came because I wanted to come, I cared because Christ cared," said Kaye.

Through the opportunities for conversation, the "Lord opened the door to witness, even in a Muslim country where you're not supposed to witness," said the two.

"There were absolutely no stumbling blocks during the whole trip," each confirmed.

Though Mike had a bout of typhoid, it only put him out of commission for six hours. Though there was a water shortage, the military gave the medical team 3,000 bottles of drinking water ("I can't waste water to this day," says Mike). Though Iraqi soldiers destroyed a boy's wheelchair, the team was able to get cooperation from Italian, French, and Dutch hospitals there to assemble a new one. Though they went for two weeks without electricity, no hardships were experienced. Though they were up at 4:30 every morning, worked until 9 each night, and saw 250-500 patients each day, they were not tired.

Kaye says that on this, her fourth volunteer mission trip, she was touched by two particular incidents: a man and his wife walked one hour to get



Kurdish women wait outside tents at the refugee camp at Zakho, near the Iraq-Turkey border.

hepatitis immunizations from the clinic, then were so astounded a Westerner would make the same trip to give shots to the rest of the family that he walked Kaye and another nurse all the way back to the camp; a ten-year-old girl lost most of her family, leaving her in charge of providing food and clothing for those remaining. The little girl suffered from severe depression and scabies. Even after she was treated, she continued to visit the clinic just for companionship. By the time the team left, she was smiling again.

For Barnes and Wilson, the effort was life-changing. Each intends to return someday. "I would love to go back and spend time with my interpreter," says Mike. "It was the most beautiful country I've ever been in." When reminded that the site of the refugee camps (around Zakho) is believed to be the site of the Garden of Eden, he understood why it held him so spellbound.

"I was constantly reminded of

Psalms 121:1: 'I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help,' " Kaye says. She left Aug. 9 for another medical mission to the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, and plans to continue her volunteer trips to wherever the Lord leads her.

"I think we're obligated to fight for these people," concludes Kaye. "To fight for their rights before the United Nations. They have been persecuted and killed for so long. Four major Third World countries have thrown them away. They have no home."

"Their fields are still full of land mines, their houses are still booby trapped," says Mike. "They fear for their lives because they never fulfilled their military obligations to Saddam Hussein."

"We are obligated to share their plight with others here, to keep the missionaries to that area in prayer. They are forging a new permanent presence there," Kaye says.

"And God always answers prayer. He is so strong."



Volunteers who administered medical aid to the Kurdish refugees are shown under the Dalal Bridge in Iraq. Left to right are Marty Brown of Nicosea, Cyprus; Lee Baggett, Guadalajara, Mexico; Per Helberg, pastor from Sweden; Kaye Wilson, assistant professor of nursing at Mississippi College, Clinton; Don Mullen; and Mike Barnes, clinical coordinator for the Mississippi Baptist Medical Center, Jackson.

World demand for English opens doors for gospel

By Donald D. Martin

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — The English language is big business, and it has attracted not only international investors but mission planners as well.

A British government agency estimated the market value of English-language instruction worldwide at nearly \$11 billion in 1989.

And the value of English as an international commodity has caught the attention of Christian strategists. Most view the growing demand for English training as a prime opportunity to reach new areas of the globe

for Christ.

"One of the greatest opportunities we have in sharing our faith is through lay people going overseas to teach English," said James Hampton, assistant vice president of Cooperative Services International, a Southern Baptist aid organization.

"If (Southern Baptists) are seriously interested in sharing the gospel of Christ, this is a wonderful way," he said.

English teaching may play a significant part in helping Southern Baptists reach their Bold Mission Thrust goals,

which center on presenting the message of Jesus Christ to all people in the world by the year 2000. At the Foreign Mission Board's August trustee meeting, President Keith Parks unveiled his vision of what steps were necessary to reach Bold Mission Thrust goals.

One of his proposals calls for at least 10,000 college and seminary students to begin foreign culture and language studies by 1995 and go overseas in 1999 to work in either direct evangelism or tentmaking.

Tentmakers are Christian profes-

sionals who often work in countries closed to missions. They support themselves with skills needed in host countries while seeking ways to present the gospel.

"Going overseas to witness as an English teacher is an excellent way of fulfilling this goal," Hampton said.

English dominates international communication and commerce. And the world's embrace of English as the international language has intensified since a wave of democratic reforms swept the globe.

The Foreign Mission Board has its

own growing list of requests for English teachers. Recently the board launched an accredited course in teaching English as a foreign language. Fifty-seven people received teaching certification at the end of an intensive three-day class held at the board's Missionary Learning Center at Rockville. By fall, this first group will have fanned out into 19 countries to teach English full time or part time.

Martin and his wife, Robin, also a journalist, taught English for two years in China.

Are you an "impact" Christian?

By Louis Lamar

In his book, *A Thinking Man's Guide to Pro-Football*, Paul Zimmerman quotes a physicist who had made an incredible discovery. This physicist had the facts to prove that when a 240 pound lineman (capable of running the 100 yard dash in eleven seconds) collides with a 240 pound running back (capable of covering the same distance in ten seconds), the resultant kinetic energy is enough to move 66,000 pounds — or 33 tons — one inch.



Lamar

The resultant force registers nearly 1000 Gs. That is 1000 times the force of gravity. Astronauts on take-off experience approximately 10 Gs and pilots tend to black out at approximately 20 Gs. When one considers the number of blows absorbed by an average running back in only three years of playing professional ball, it's amazing that any are able to walk without a cane upon retiring from the game.

What kind of impact are you having on the lives of other people? Most people do not consider the "spiritual impact" that they have on those around them. Who can possibly gauge the impact that an 80-year-old shepherd named Moses had on Egypt when he stood up against Pharaoh? Nor can one measure the impact that Nehemiah had on Tobiah . . . or Job had on Elihu . . . or Paul had on Agrippa . . . or Luther had on Rome . . . or evangelists like Wesley, Moody, and Graham have had on England and America.

How about your life? Whose life has the Lord used you to impact? We impact lives every day . . . good or bad. God gives us daily opportunities to serve as his personal messenger; how well do we carry out our assignment? We are told in Matthew 5:14: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden." Verse 16 instructs us to "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Christians, as the Light, are to show the love of Christ through them. Their light should shine "in such a way," that God is glorified. In such a way, tells us how we should act, or conduct ourselves in public. Our very behavior should impact lives in a positive way, because we are mirroring Christ.

Lamar is pastor, Mount Sinai Church, Tupelo.

BOARD

From page 3

The budget as it now stands — subject to approval by the Mississippi Baptist Convention in November — will send \$7,987,721 to SBC causes with the Foreign Mission Board receiving the largest portion; \$8,123,913 to convention board causes, and \$5,476,801 to state Baptist institutions. The largest amount in that category would be \$3,622,500 for Christian education and another \$650,000 for Christian education capital needs.

The Mississippi Education Commission's budget allocation formula has been revised: 50 percent of the allocation distributed on the basis of total student hours over 12 months; 30 percent distributed equally to the three institutions; 8 percent on the basis of the number of degree-granting sites within the state of Mississippi (six); 11 percent on the basis of the number of ministerial students attending, number of ministers' dependents attending, and the number of Mississippi Baptist students attending; and up to 1 percent for the Commission's expenses.

This formula does not specifically designate monies for Clarke College which recently lost its accreditation.

The Baptist Children's Village would get \$436,000; the Baptist Medical Center, \$175,000; Board of Ministerial Education, \$150,000; Christian Action Commission, \$212,315; Historical Commission, \$37,319; and Mississippi Baptist Foundation, \$193,667.

Any overage of the budget would be divided in the following manner: the first \$85,000 going to the Zimbabwe foreign missions partnership, and any funds exceeding that to be divided 25 percent to SBC causes and 75 percent to Mississippi's Christian Education capital needs.

The board approved an Executive Committee recommendation to retain Peat Marwick Main and Company, certified public accountants, as auditors for the year 1991.

Other Executive Committee recommendations approved by the full board also included authorizing granting of longevity of employment to employees who return to board service after working for such SBC entities as the Home or Foreign Mission Board. And the group made a policy statement that the board "is responsible for approving possible types of

recognition from local groups" concerning staff members at Baptist Student Unions.

And the board approved a study recommended by the new church expansion committee to study non-church ministries such as that to seamen and to truckers to consider how these ministries can be supported financially.

Board President Rex Yancey of Quitman named members of the next year's committee on board organization. They are Doug Broome, chairman; Ben Carlisle; Avery Jones; Clarence Cooper Jr.; and David Sellers.

Earlier the Executive Committee approved dedication of the 1991 convention annual to the late Miss Edwina Robinson, retired executive director of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union.

The Executive Committee also approved participation in a MissionsFest, promoting foreign missions, probably in 1993. And the group, on Executive Director Bill Causey's recommendation, hired Carlie Hill to a part time position in the Evangelism Department.

Hill, currently part time bus pastor and minister of outreach at Parkway Church, Jackson, will develop what Causey called "Sunday day care." Hill will develop in Jackson a pilot program for children of parents who work on Sundays and who don't go to church anywhere.

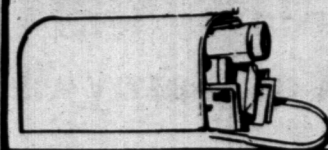
A graduate of William Carey College, Hill, 63, earned the master of religious education degree from New Orleans Seminary.

He has been at Parkway since 1974 when he became bus pastor and minister of outreach. He retired from doing the job full time last year, but has remained in it half time. He was pastor of Crestwood Church, Jackson, 1971-74, and at First Church, Mississippi City at Gulfport, 1968-71. Earlier he was minister to the deaf at First Churches of Dallas, Shreveport, and Gulfport.

Hill and his wife Oleta have four children. He is a veteran of the Korean War.

The Executive Committee voted to purchase a new computer system for the convention board. The system will require an outlay of up to \$425,000. The report to the committee noted that maintenance on the current system would soon exceed \$30,000 annually.

(See BOARD on page 10)



Letters to the editor

Proud of MBMC

Editor:

Recently I had the unfortunate experience of having complete knee surgery at the Mississippi Baptist Medical Center in Jackson. Fortunately, it was done at the Baptist Medical Center. I want to praise the staff, nurses, and all who had part in seeing to it that I was comfortable and well taken care of. Personally, I cannot say enough about how wonderfully I was treated at our Baptist Hospital.

I am proud to be part of our Baptist work and especially proud that we have this facility available that cares for people. Mississippi Baptists are fortunate to have such a fine institution in our state.

Bob G. Lynch
pastor, Central Church
McComb

Great Commission does not exempt Utah

Editor:

Ministry to Mormons is a risky step to take especially to someone who does not fully understand the deception of Mormonism. I learned the hard way because about two years ago I felt strong enough in my relationship with the Lord to share with two Mormon missionaries. After months of confrontation, I fell into the trap of Mormonism. This was not because I didn't have a true relationship with Christ, but because of my lack of knowledge about Mormonism and my orthodox Christian beliefs.

I am out of the Mormon Church and I can say from experience that leaving the LDS church was physical, mental, and spiritual hell. God has used my mistake in ways I never realized that he could. All of the events seem a small price to pay if the experience can help someone else avoid or escape Mormonism.

In response to "Utah Missions request to ask the SBC to rescind their

decision to hold the 1998 Southern Baptist Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah," I say, the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) does not exempt Utah.

I agree that the average Southern Baptist does not know enough about the LDS church, but if we are going to share the true love and grace of Jesus Christ, we need to take the time to learn. I am also sure that a great deal of money will go directly into the hands of the LDS church if the Southern Baptist Convention is held in Salt Lake City, but that seems a small price to pay in order to help plant the seed for one lost LDS person to come to know the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

Danny Ellis
University, Miss.

Legislative alert

Editor:

If you have not already done so, please contact your Congressperson and ask him or her to co-sponsor the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (H.R.2797). The bill will restore the protections for religious exercise lost in *Oregon v. Smith*, the so-called peyote decision. The bill, which is supported by both the Baptist Joint Committee and the Christian Life Commission, will not guarantee the rights of Native Americans to ingest peyote in their religious ceremonies, but it will require government to show a "compelling" interest before restricting religious practices.

Without H.R.2797 churches "have nothing to protect them from zoning, tax, anti-discrimination, and other laws that are not specifically targeted at religion."

The Honorable
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
Dear Congressperson
Thank you for your help.
Oliver S. Thomas
Baptist Joint Committee

Christian education

Editor:

As we both know, newspapers limit those of us who may oppose the viewpoints of the editor to few words, but, I'm going to keep trying.

Your "Editor's Notebook" of August 15, 1991 is very good — with one exception! We certainly do need Christian education in this nation more than ever before, but for Christians to continue to promote government schools (which you call free public) is to destroy both practical Christianity and our country.

You said, "Our forefathers . . . built public schools throughout the land." Well, depending upon how far back you want to go, that statement may or may not be true.

Our founding fathers encouraged the public to become educated but they never encouraged government schools supported by compulsory taxation and using a government curriculum. As a matter of fact, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the first ten amendments did not mention the word education: It was left up to the states. The federal government has no constitutional authority to interfere in or financially support education.

What you know of as "public education" began in this country in the middle 1800s by Horace Mann, a Unitarian, and certainly not a Bible-believing Christian.

From that modest beginning to date you will find America changing from a constitutional republic to a socialist democracy and most with the teachings of the government schools.

If you will examine both the United States Constitution and the Communist Manifesto you will find government schools teaching more Karl Marx and the Communist Manifesto than you will Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Madison, and the U.S. Constitution.

Bob Wells
Hazlehurst



Faces and places

by Anne Washburn McWilliams



"Six days do your work"

"Many times I took up my pen to write," said Cervantes, "and many times I put it down, not knowing what to say." Today I can think of 25 or 30 topics I want to write about, but I can't settle on one. So I take up my pen to write and put it down again. (Imagine having something in common with that great Spanish writer!)

Summer is swiftly nearing an end; next Monday is Labor Day. On page 1 of this paper is a picture of Sam Gore's sculpture, "Working Man," reading a book. At the museum, I examined the statue more closely and saw that the man is reading a Bible. That led me to search for scriptures about "work."

Why work? Because after God created the world he gave Adam and Eve — and us — the task of world management. As Genesis 2:15 says, "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." Why work? "We gave you this rule: If a man will not work, he shall not eat" (II Thess. 3:10).

When to work? "Six days do your work, but on the seventh day do not

work" (Ex. 23:12).

What should be your attitude toward work? "Respect those who work hard among you . . ." (I Thess. 5:12).

Can you be happy at work? "When God gives any man wealth and possessions and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work, this is a gift of God" (Eccles. 5:19).

Could your work pass the quality test? "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, straw, the work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work" (I Cor. 3:11-13).

Do you have a helper with your work? "We are laborers together with God" (I Cor. 3:9).

Whatever my work, it does have dignity. Whatever my job, God can use it for fulfilling his purposes.

I am not to put my job ahead of God

or of the church or of my family. But it definitely has a place on my list of priorities. That is the rule. I can't say I always follow it. God didn't say I had to be rich or famous, or "successful." But I think he is glad when I work hard at the tasks he has given me, to the best of my ability.

My first job, at age 16, was sweeping the floor in the spinning room of a cotton mill. The thunderous machinery, the throat-clogging clouds of lint, the humid, torturous heat — all threatened to defeat me. Somehow I stuck it out to the end of my 10 weeks to save money for eye surgery I needed. Yet I vowed to go to college or do whatever I needed to do to avoid spending my life in the spinning room of a cotton mill!

Writing for the Baptist Record has been much easier than sweeping lint in a cotton mill. Yet it's not always completely easy. Always it's hard to please everybody. Some days I find myself picking up my pen and putting it down again.

But I wouldn't trade jobs with anyone.

Names in the news



New Student Body Association officers at New Orleans Seminary for the 1991-92 academic year are (left to right) Alan Permenter, student in the master of divinity degree program from West Point, president; Tammy Anderson, student in the master of divinity degree program from Mobile, Ala., vice president; and Buddy Landry, student in the master of divinity degree program from Biloxi, secretary.



Concord Church, Pelahatchie, held a deacon ordination service on Aug. 11 to ordain three new deacons. They were: Perry Moore, Bob Olander, and Alton Baner. After the service a reception was held in Fellowship Hall to honor the new deacons and their families. Pictured, left to right, are LaVerne Summerlin, pastor, Moore, Olander, and Baner.

Splunge Church to celebrate 70th year

Splunge Church, Greenwood Springs, Monroe Association, will celebrate its 70th anniversary on Sept. 15. The church began in 1921 with 19 charter members, under the leadership of J. M. Walker.

Splunge has only eight pastors in its 70 year history, and recognizes two men ordained into the gospel ministry.

Morning services will begin at 10 a.m. with singing and previous

pastors sharing in this occasion. James Rutledge, pastor, will be the speaker for the worship hour. Lunch will be served in Fellowship Hall.

The afternoon service will begin at 1:30 p.m. A brief history of the church will be given, and special music provided by the adult choir. A time capsule will be buried at the conclusion of the day's activities and is to be dug up on the 100th anniversary in September 2021.

Chaplains will meet at Garaywa

Carl Hart will be the featured speaker for the Mississippi Baptist Chaplains' Association Fall Retreat at Camp Garaywa, Sept. 6-7. Hart is with Allied Systems, Decatur, Ga., and known as the "Trucker's Chaplain."

Musical entertainment will be provided by Dan Guest and the Messengers from Bowmar Church in Vicksburg.

Ed Holmes of Gulfport is the current president of the association and Richard Brogan, Cooperative Missions Department, is the consultant to the group.

To register, contact the Cooperative Missions Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Missionary family escapes injury in grenade attack

By Marty Croll

ZAMBOANGA CITY, Philippines (BP) — Two children of a Southern Baptist missionary couple in the Philippines escaped injury Aug. 10 when a grenade hurled onto a stage in front of them failed to explode.

The 10-year-old son watched as a second grenade landed behind the stage backdrop and a young woman went toward it, apparently to pick it up. It exploded, killing her and another woman and injuring about 40 others.

The incident occurred during a dramatic presentation by Christians working on the Doulos, a ship sponsored by Operation Mobilization of New Jersey. The ship docks in ports throughout the world conducting educational and book exhibitions, conferences, training seminars, and other forms of evangelistic outreach. Several hundred people were in the audience.

Zamboanga, on the Philippine island of Mindanao, is a trading city with a population that is 40 percent Muslim. It is marked by violence and reportedly is a haven for Muslim separatists who have been fighting since the 1970s for a separate republic.

Using their small van throughout the night, the missionary couple, who asked not to be identified, took one injured person to a nearby hospital and transported two others to another hospital after the first one filled up. They also delivered medicines and carried messages between the hospitals and the Doulos ship.

Croll writes for FMB.

Staff changes

John L. Turner, formerly of Jasper, Ala., has assumed duties as pastor of First Church, Lucedale, effective July 1. Turner had been pastor of Edgil

Grove Church, Jasper. While in Alabama, Turner has served on the Committee on Boards and Commissions and the Resolutions Committee for the Alabama Convention. He is a graduate of Mobile College and New Orleans Seminary.

Jimmy Sanders has accepted the pastorate of Pleasant Hill Church, Clarke County.

Paul Sanders accepted the call as pastor of First Church, McLaurin, Lebanon Association, effective Aug. 11. He was former pastor of Corinth Church, Carthage. He received his associate degree from Mid-American Seminary, Memphis, Tenn. First Church also called a new director of music and youth, Dana R. Denson.

Steep Hollow Church, Pearl River Association, has called Larry Robertson as pastor, effective Aug. 25. He assumes this position after having served as associate pastor at Hopewell Church, Savannah, Tenn., where Randy Isbell is pastor. He will begin studies at New Orleans Seminary this fall.

Leon Williams is the new pastor of Hepzibah Church, Clarke County. From Stonewall, he began his new duties on Aug. 18.

Glenn Shows accepted the position of minister of education and activities at First Church, Greenwood. He is

graduate of Clarke College, Louisiana College, and NOBTS. His previous position was in First Church, Paris, Texas, since 1986. John Gibson is pastor.

Great Britain and Germany are the most unbanished countries in Europe, with a total of 80% living in towns and cities. This compares with 60% throughout Europe.

Julius Harbison has accepted the pastorate of Pachuta Church and began his duties there on Aug. 11. From Alabama, he and his wife, Sheila, are students at Clarke College.

Southside Church, Aberdeen, has called Clinton White to serve as minister of youth and Johnnie Masters to serve as music director. Both began serving in August. Kenneth E. Walters is pastor.

Beacon Church, Hattiesburg, has called Jon Kittrell as minister of music, associate pastor, and minister of college students, effective Sept. 1. A native of Hattiesburg, he graduated in May at the University of Southern Mississippi and is a student at New Orleans Seminary.

John Sproles has resigned Peeler Memorial Church, Attala Association, and is available for supply or interim. His address is 317 Fairground, Kosciusko, MS 39090.

Freddie Tanksley, formerly pastor of the Harmony Church, Attala Association, is available for supply or interim. His address is Route 3, Kosciusko, MS 39090.

Derma Church, Calhoun Association, has called Kim Parker of Bruce as interim minister of music, effective Aug. 25. A native of Chicago, Ill., Kim received her education at the University of Mississippi.

Homecomings

New Prospect, Brookhaven: Sept. 1; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; James Watts, former pastor, speaker for 11 a.m. service; dinner served; music program, 1:30 p.m.; Ruth Oliver, former music director, music; Gene Douglas, pastor.

Revival dates

Carey Chapel, Mount Pleasant: Fullness Conference; Sept. 8-11; Sun., 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 10 a.m. (sessions for men and women) and 7 p.m. nightly; Charlie Greene and Ras and Beverly Robinson, speakers; Ken Bradley, pastor.

Meadowview Church, Starkville: Sept. 8-11; Bruce Gill, Hammond, La., evangelist; Bobby and Lollie Ready, Baton Rouge, La., music evangelist; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.

Sherman (Lee): Sept. 8-13; James Travis, head of Biblical Studies Department, Blue Mountain College, evangelist; Terry Hurt, West Jackson Church, Tupelo, music; services, 7 p.m. nightly; Mike Smith, pastor.

Revival results

Northrup Chapel (Clarke): Aug. 4-9; Claude Killian of Quitman, Hebron Ridge pastor, guest evangelist; Dennis Cochran, leading the singing; Ken Brown, pastor; five decisions and five baptisms the following Sunday.

Macedonia (Lebanon): Aug. 4-8; Mike Smith, Meridian, preaching; Boyd Tweedy, Petal, music; three professions of faith; Jerry Doggett, pastor.

Baptist pray during Madagascar demonstrations

By Craig Bird

ANTANANARIVO, Madagascar (BP) — Madagascar may have two presidents and two prime ministers — but it doesn't have a functioning government.

Daily crowds of up to 400,000 people clog the streets of the island nation's capital, Antananarivo, demanding political change while taxes go uncollected, banks refuse to open, and postal services are paralyzed.

Southern Baptist missionary Fred Sorrells of Brady, Texas, has continued to work in the chaotic situation. It has erupted into real violence only once, when demonstrators were shot to death on the streets in front of the Sorrells residence. The Sorrells, who live across from the presidential palace, were not at home.

The shootings occurred Aug. 10 when President Didier Ratsiraka's North Korean-trained presidential

guard fired on the demonstrators. The Madagascar Red Cross said 31 people died that day in the capital, while another 20 deaths were reported in related violence in the north.

About 1,000 Baptists in the city "aren't very visible on either side politically," according to Sorrells. "They feel their main role is praying for the situation."

Sorrells left Madagascar Aug. 21 enroute to the United States to join his family for a furlough in Austin, Texas. His wife, Sami, a Houston native, and their three children left Aug. 1.

More than two months of massive street demonstrations and a nationwide general strike spawned the dual chief executives Aug. 19.

Opposition leaders declared President Ratsiraka stripped of all powers and themselves the legitimate government.

They also "voided" the 1975 constitution and "dissolved" Madagascar's National Assembly and High Court. Ratsiraka dissolved his own government three weeks ago and named a new prime minister, but has not moved beyond that point.

Since the shootings Ratsiraka has remained holed up in the presidential palace issuing decrees banning public assemblies and imposing curfews, which are flaunted publicly and massively. Even his order giving the military extensive powers of search and arrest has been largely ineffectual as the army has tried to distance itself from the Aug. 10 violence, according to Associated Press reports.

Sorrells credits the relative calm that still prevails to the basic nature of the peaceful Malagasy people. "Violence is the last resort in their

culture, so the manifestation of these demonstrations shows how serious the situation is," he said.

Sorrells, who also is trying to establish an evangelistic outreach in the Comoro Islands, remained in the country after his family left to lead evangelistic efforts at a multinational cultural and athletic festival set for Aug. 6-13. The festival was canceled Aug. 4 and his plans to visit the Comoros went awry when all flights leaving the country were overbooked.

"I spent a couple of days standing in line at the airport trying to get a ticket on any plane to anywhere," he explained. "I even considered flying out on Aeroflot (the Soviet airline)."

"If I had done that I would have landed in Moscow just in time for those mass demonstrations!"

Bird writes for FMB.

From Mississippi to Minnesota

By Ben R. Stewart

"Missions from one end of the Mississippi River to the other" became the logo for First Church, Magnolia, when a group of 18 men and women answered the call for help in constructing the Freestone, Minnesota, Church. Shirts and caps with this logo were worn by all team members who witnessed as they traveled.

Joe Brewer of First Church, Brookhaven, is coordinating the construction at Freestone.

First Church of Magnolia raised money before going to purchase and pour the concrete floor in the basement of the Freestone Church and other materials.

Faye Honea, Mary Nell Walters, and Becky and Susan Tanner conducted the Bible School at Splithand Church where there had been no previous Bible School, and taught several of the local women in the church how it was done so they could hold their own next year. The

Splithand Church has a small membership of about 40 and during the week of Bible School there was an average of 22 children in attendance. At Thursday night prayer meeting the Bible School held its graduation and Tony Murry, pastor of Splithand and Freestone Churches, pointed out it

was the largest crowd that had ever been in the church. One of the local women commented it was her first time to be in this church but she would be back. She had a child who had participated in Bible School during the week.

Stewart lives in Magnolia.



Team members in front of the Freestone Church on Friday afternoon just before leaving on the 27-hour-plus trip back to Mississippi.



Pictured, left to right, are bottom row, Harold Wilson, Terrys Creek Church, Magnolia; Susan Tanner, First Church, Kentwood, La.; Faye Honea, First Church, Magnolia; Jack Honea, First Church, Magnolia; second row, Aubrey Schilling, First, Magnolia; Becky Tanner, First Church, Kentwood, La.; Mary Nell Walters, First, Magnolia; Jimmy Anderson, First Church, Magnolia; third row, Bill Coon, First Church, Magnolia; Ben Stewart, First Church, Magnolia; Rez Nelson, Evans Creek Church, Pearl River, La.; Billy Granger, Bluff Springs Church,

Magnolia; Ed Nunnery, First Church, Magnolia; A. C. Garner, Silver Creek Church, Tylertown; Henry Chambers, Brookhaven Church, Decatur, Ala.; and fourth row, Mack Honea, First Church, Magnolia; Carl Fortenberry, Bluff Springs Church, Magnolia; Joe Brewer, First Church, Brookhaven; Adam Calcote, First Church, Brookhaven; Walter (preacher) Gardner, First Church, Magnolia; and Grant Bennett, First Church, Magnolia.

Burroughs tells college students, "Let God's Word come alive!"

By Chip Alford

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP) — A spiritual revival will not come to the world until it first comes to the college campus, Calvin Miller told more than 2,400 Southern Baptist college students and leaders attending the 1991 Student Conference at Glorieta Conference Center.

Miller, pastor of Westside Church in Omaha, Neb., told students revival will come to their schools only when they give themselves "to constant prayer and the infilling of the Holy Spirit." He encouraged students to become disciplined in Bible reading and prayer.

"God will never make you exercise those disciplines which move you into a deeper and deeper relationship with him," he added.

Miller and Esther Burroughs, national evangelism consultant for women for the Home Mission Board,

were worship leaders for the Aug. 10-16 conference. Their messages to students were built around the theme, "God's Word — Alive."

Describing God's Word as a "love letter from God," Burroughs challenged students to let Scripture come alive in their everyday lives.

"I believe this world is crying out for us to act as if the Word had been made flesh in our very lives and we can stand on it and act on it," she said.

Morning Bible studies during the week were led by Jerry Hayner, pastor of Forest Hills Church in Raleigh, N.C. Hayner taught his book, "Dealing With Life's Questions," the new collegiate edition of Outreach Bible Study. Following each morning session, students broke into "share groups" to learn how to lead evangelistic Bible studies.

The collegiate years are "probably

the most burdened time of care you will have in your life when you consider the kind of decisions you have to make," Hayner told students. Career, dating, marriage, and religious convictions are just a few areas in which students have to make sometimes difficult choices, he said.

Hayner encouraged students looking for success to turn to the only One who can provide it, "and his name is Jesus."

In addition to attending seminars, Bible studies and worship services, about 300 students participated in a "Read-Through-The-Bible Marathon." Reading scripture aloud in pairs in 30-minute intervals, the students took 73 and one-half hours to read from Genesis to Revelation.

Alford writes for BSSB.

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BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9

GREEN LIGHT

From page 3

The trip has been planned to coincide with the Moscow International Book Fair. Team members will distribute New Testaments at the fair as well as through street evangelism efforts in Moscow and in Yalta and Frunze (recently renamed Bishkek). Yalta is a small resort town on the Black Sea in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Frunze is a major city in the Kirghizia S.S.R. and shares a border with China.

The invitation to participate in the book fair and in the street evangelism efforts came from Soviet Christians.

"The Russians are looking forward to the team's arrival and say 'Come on!'" Warrington said.

"We have prayed that we would have the opportunity to go and work

with our Soviet Christian brothers and sisters," said Andrea Mullins, Baptist Women specialist for WMU and one of the trip's tour directors.

It's an answer to prayer that the doors remain open for us to go.

The Bible distribution project is part of a larger project being sponsored by Southern Baptists and the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association.

Other entities supporting the effort include the International Bible Society, which is matching donations from individuals to purchase the Bibles for distribution, and the Holman Bible Publishers Division of the Sunday School Board in Nashville.

The 70,000 Bibles already have been shipped to the Soviet Union. Each volunteer in the group helped pay the cost of the shipping in the total cost of the trip.

Doyle writes for WMU.

Missionaries throughout world can call Ole Miss for travel risk advice

UNIVERSITY, Miss. — Travel advisories: Panama, low risk; Brazil, moderate risk; India, high risk; El Salvador, extreme risk; Northern Ireland, extreme risk; Spain, extreme risk.

More accurate and up-to-date travel information will soon be available to missionaries throughout the world, simply by calling a telephone number at The University of Mississippi. The new service comes in a year when terrorism is expected to escalate because of international political problems.

Called Project Safe, the service is funded by a grant from the Evangelical Foreign Mission Association to Chester Quarles — a political science professor who is also in a group of consultants who train missionaries to increase their chances of surviving and avoiding terrorist attacks. By early fall, this unique computer software program will be in place to provide risk assessments, with a daily update, on international locations.

Evangelical Foreign Mission Association is a consortium of nearly 100 mission and Christian relief organizations.

"The terrorists don't want their country or area to be developed," said Quarles. "They want it to remain impoverished, so they can control it. They want people starving. They don't want social needs met because they want the people to revolt against the government. Then the revolutionists can go into power. In that regard, missionaries and relief workers providing food, health services, economic development, etc. to an area are prime targets."

The Ole Miss professor explained, "To terrorists, the things that most Americans would consider very good and very appropriate would be a threat to their revolutionary organizations."

Quarles and a doctoral student will base the assessment they make on numerous sources of information, including three different data banks.

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Thursday, August 29, 1991

Georgia students visit Pachuta

A group of 18 students from Shorter College, Rome, Ga., made a trip to Pachuta in Clarke County the weekend of Aug. 18. They did visitation in homes in the community, reports Armand Traylor. Then they were in charge of the Sunday night service at Pachuta Church, including the presentation of special music. One rededication was registered at the close of the service. Aug. 18 was only the second Sunday for the church's new pastor, Julius Harbison.

Belmont College hosts conference of deaf

The movement did not stop throughout the daily worship services during the annual Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf held at Belmont College's Massey Auditorium Aug. 3-9. Worshipers who are deaf and blind held on to their interpreters' hands as the morning message was delivered in sign language.

Attendance for the 43rd annual conference, which met in Nashville was estimated at 900. The meeting sites rotate between Glorieta, N.M. and Ridgecrest, N.C. and a local site. Every third year meeting draws the largest crowds said David Fair, who was "born and raised coming to these conferences."

Fair, the outgoing president of SBCD, is the son of James and Lavern Fair and has attended SBCD since he was young. Fair, his parents and grandparents are all deaf.

Carter Bearden, national ethnic consultant for the deaf with the Home Mission Board affirmed that missions endeavors with the deaf in the states and abroad continue to grow. Through a cooperative effort with the Foreign Mission Board the gospel is being carried to the deaf in more and more foreign countries, he said.

Vladimire Boev, a hearing pastor from the Soviet Union and raised by deaf parents, visited this year's SBCD with an interest in forming a partnership to minister to the deaf in Russia.

It is not unusual for family members of the deaf to be involved in ministry to the deaf. Bearden has two hearing sons who are pastors of deaf congregations. Carter Bearden, Jr. is pastor of the deaf at First Church, Richmond, Va.

BOARD

From page 7

And the report says that replacement costs and outside work required would push computer-related outlays to an additional \$25,000 annually.

The new equipment will be paid for by departments out of their budgets over six years.

The committee approved replacement of the board-owned car that Causey drives. A recent unexplainable brake failure has caused Oldsmobile to want to repurchase the car. The company offered to trade for a 1992 automobile for a difference of \$4,083.12.

Also approved were repairs on Baptist Student Centers up to \$105,000. This amount includes repairs on the University of Southern Mississippi BSU center, a new roof for the center at Mississippi University for Women, and carpet and installation at Northeast Mississippi Community College, Perkinston Community College, and Mississippi State University.

And the committee voted for exterior painting and window repair of the Baptist Building for a total of \$12,666.10.

Just for the Record



Highland Church, Vicksburg, recently had a GA/Acteen recognition service. Pictured, top left, Mission Friends, left to right, are Andrea Jennings, Michael Shinn, Marla Richardson, Anna Larson, Rachel Miller, and Amanda Gettner. Esther Lee is leader.

Top right, 1st-3rd GAs, are Jennifer Jennings, Kelly Ashley, Laura Beth Steen, Melanie Heard, Tracy Gordon, Melanie Herrington, Crissy Richmond, Amber Larson, and Jessica Rickles. Robin Herrington is leader; and bottom left, 4th-6th GAs,



Woodlawn Church, Vicksburg, recently held its GA recognition service. Top photo, receiving a second year badge, left to right, are: Lyndsey Dalliva, Molly Kough, Barbara Jones, Leah Smith; first year badge, Bethany Cunningham. Roxie Ann Dowe is director.

Middle photo, receiving a three year badge are: Amy Ragan, Rebecca Hensarling, Robin Dowe, Lyndsey Oulsey; four year badge: Dara Goree, Nadya Elqadi, Ashley Bryant, and Candace Moore. Director is Pam White. Helper is Lynn Hanson.

Bottom photo, receiving a six year badge are: Brooks Rainer, Merideth Beach, Lyndsey Moore, Laura Wolfe, Ashley White, Candace Alexander; five year badge: Jaime Oldenburg, Jennifer Ragan, Amy Wilkerson, Danielle Cunningham, and Lisa Alexander. Director is Sharon Dalliva. Helper is Linda Cunningham.



are Mindy Shinn, Alisha Rogers, Amber Miller, Erin Loper, Nicki Richmond, Carrie Handley, Melissa Herrington, Tina Shinn, Whitney Richardson, Brea Hugley, Rachel Patten, and Amanda Ingels. Joyce Shinn is leader.

Acteens, bottom right, Queen-With-Scepter Nikki Rogers; Page Andrea Jennings; Haley Terry; Queen Regent Tara Hall; Page Michael Shinn; Queen-With-Scepter Amanda Richardson; Page Marla Richardson; Andrea Cain and Andrea Palerino. Jackie Richardson, leader. William Patten is pastor.

New Faith Church, Pontotoc, will celebrate its 10th anniversary on Sept. 1 at 11 a.m. Rex Ard, pastor, will be the speaker. A covered dish meal will be held in fellowship hall at noon. The Gospel Ship and the Gospelaires will be on program. Other activities will include local talent for afternoon singing.

Mississippi Baptist Medical Center and the Mississippi Lung Association are sponsoring a free asthma seminar on Sept. 7, from 9 to 11 a.m., in the hospital's subway auditorium in Jackson. James Haltom, allergist, will be the key speaker. The seminar, designed to promote education on asthma, is for asthmatic adults and parents of asthmatic children. For more information, call 362-5453.

Volunteer dies after fall from roof

A volunteer worker at his own church died as result of a fall from the church roof, when his head struck the concrete below. William Bright was helping with repairs at the Waltham Baptist Church in Webster Association, where he was a member, when the accident occurred.

Yalobusha prayer retreat: Sept. 7

An associational prayer retreat will be held on Sept. 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at First Church, Water Valley's activities center, according to Mary McKinney, Yalobusha Baptist Women's associational director. It had been previously announced that the meeting would be in a home.

Mr. and Mrs. Bryan Cunningham, will speak and sing. He is a layman who went to Japan on a mission trip. Mahayle Hames will lead the singing. Shirley Berry will present special music.

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From persecutor to proclaimer!

By Kiely D. Young
Acts 9:1-22

Acts 9 brings us one of the most dynamic conversion experiences given in the Bible. The conversion of Saul of Tarsus, later to become the apostle Paul, may lead us to think, "If God can take a man as Saul and do such a complete transition with his life, nothing is impossible for him." But, we should not get carried away by the earth-shaking, startling conversion experience of Saul and think we must have a similar experience to be converted. God still speaks in his still, quiet voice and brings conviction to children, youth, and adults.

THE PERSECUTOR BECOMES A PAUPER (vv. 1, 2). Saul was intense in his desire to persecute anyone opposing Judaism. He stood by at the trial of Stephen and was "in hearty agreement with putting him to death" (Acts 8:1). This seemed to encourage his desire for persecution: "Saul . . . made havoc of the church, and entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison" (8:3).

Now Saul, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, and desired letters to Damascus to the synagogues, if he found any

of the Way . . . he might bring them bound to Jerusalem" (9:1,2). Saul seemed to rage with a madness to eradicate followers of Christ. He was a self-appointed chief inquisitor.

THE PERSECUTOR BECOMES A PAUPER (vv. 3-9). The journey along the Damascus road was quite different than Saul anticipated. The arrogant Saul was greeted by the holy presence of the Lord Jesus with a brilliance so bright that Saul fell to the ground in amazement. There Saul heard the voice of Christ, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Saul, not recognizing the voice, said, "Who art thou, Lord?" Jesus said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Saul, trembling responded, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (vv. 3-6). The arrogant Saul suddenly becomes the subdued Saul.

Before he was breathing threats against followers of Christ; now he was asking Christ for direction. He was surrendering his will to the will of Christ. This prompt and immediate action marks the true nature of conversion. Saul was told to go to Damascus to await further instructions. When he opened his eyes, he discovered he could not see anything and had to be led to Damascus by those with him . . . total surrender. There must be a

similar response for anyone coming to Christ. We must come on his terms and follow his directions. He tells us to turn from our way of sin and turn to his way of light and life.

THE PAUPER BECOMES A PETITIONER (vv. 10-12). God selected Ananias to be his ambassador to Saul. God gave him specific directions as to Saul's location on Straight Street, and told Ananias that Saul would be praying. This was certainly a different posture for Saul. But, Saul had been fasting and praying for three days seeking God's direction. God told Saul Ananias would come to him and lay hands on him that he might receive his sight again. So Paul prayed. Without a doubt God had Saul's attention, and in that humble posture he was ready to receive a Word from the Lord. He would wait intently until God sent his messenger. There are times God puts us on hold waiting for an answer. We may want it immediately, but it will come in God's timing. We must wait and pray for God's will as well.

THE PETITIONER BECOMES A PROCLAIMER (vv. 13-20). Ananias was at first reluctant to go to Saul. He was aware of the reputation of Saul in Jerusalem for persecuting the saints, and he was not anxious to become a martyr. But the Lord told Ananias that Saul was a "chosen vessel . . . to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel" (v. 15). Ananias obeyed to Lord and went to Saul and laid hands on him that Saul

might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. There are many reluctant witnesses in our churches. We think of every excuse not to be available to God to share his Word and impart his love. But there are many hearts already prepared by the Holy Spirit ready to receive Christ if we will be obedient.

A pastor friend told of an experience on a partnership mission in Brazil. They were waiting for their interpreter and decided to visit a home on their own even though there was a language barrier. They knocked on the door of a very well-to-do family and heard a voice in English, "May I help you?" They told them the intent of their visit was simply to tell them about their friend Jesus. The lady responded, "I have been praying someone would come to tell my friends gathered with me about Jesus. Please come in." Several ladies came to Christ as a result of hearts prepared by the Holy Spirit.

Verse 18 tells us that Saul received his sight and he went straight to be baptized . . . total obedience. He then was fed and encouraged by the disciples at Damascus. Then (v. 20), "straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God." **FROM PERSECUTOR TO PROCLAIMER!!** Every Christian should have a similar testimony of his new experience with Jesus. We just shouldn't wait to tell somebody about Jesus.

Young is pastor of First Church, Greenville.

Judgment and recovery of Judah

By Randy W. Turner
I Kings 14:21-15:24

The judgment and recovery in Judah show that God calls his people to stand for right and oppose evil regardless of others' examples or pressures.

I. Reign of Rehoboam (I Kings 14:21-31). Among individual men as in entire communities, cities, and nations, revolt against the living God results from haughtiness, overprosperity, and carnal security bringing as inevitable consequences poverty, ruin, and misfortune.

As high as Judah stood under David and Solomon, so deep in proportion did it sink under Rehoboam. The enormity of sin was unmistakable. It is not unnoticed by a just God. It is committed "in the sight of

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God" (v. 22). It is a trial of the love of God. "They provoked him to jealousy with their sins." It is flagrant evidence of faithfulness to the divine covenant. It earns an unenviable notoriety; "above all that their fathers had done."

II. The Reign of Abijam (I Kings 15:1-8). The fruit does not fall far from the tree. The parental house is for a child the preparatory school of life. What he sees there and hears there is never forgotten through life. No example is so weighty and important as that of parents. How great then is their responsibility. Abijam followed not after the example of David, great and glorious as it was, but after that of his father Rehoboam which he saw immediately before him. Abijam inherited not only his father's crown but his father's sins and so spends his three years as if he had been no kin to his grandfather's virtues.

Under Abijam God was forsaken, the temple was neglected, his worship adulterated. If there were any (and doubtless there were some) faithful hearts yet remaining in both kingdoms during those heavy times, how corrosive it must have been to see them so deplored and miserable with depravation. The idolatry of Abijam deserved the same punishment as that of Jeroboam. The enmity, strife, and war between the sister-kingdoms was the result of their broken covenant with the Lord God. Be it amid a nation, a community, or a family, where the fear of the living God and the bond of union with him is destroyed, there will ever be strife and discord. Peace is only to be found where the God of peace reigns in the heart. To go out of the world at enmity is not a blessed death.

III. The Reign of Asa (I Kings 15:9-24). It is to be regarded as the meritorious providence of God when the son who has grown up with evil surroundings and the bad example of a father and mother yet holds steadily to his word and

commandments and resists firmly all ungodly influences. The standard of right is the will of God. Asa could not hope to restore God to his kingdom while those abominations inhabited it. Asa defaced all the idols. The duty to his parent could not win him from his high standard. He does not more honor his father than hate an idol. No dearness of person should take off the edge of our contempt for sin.

To remove deep-rooted and long-standing evil suddenly and completely is impossible even for a well-intentioned, powerful ruler. For in that case he would bring about resistance to the good rather than further it. In 2 Chronicles 14:3 we read that Asa "took away the altars of the strange gods in the high places" and in verse 5 that "he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images." Asa did what was right in the eyes of the Lord and was fully committed to the Lord all his life (I Kings 15:11a and 14b). Recovery resulted.

Turner is pastor, Parkway Church, Natchez.

Persistence in prayer offers communion with God

By Don Dobson
Luke 11:1, 5:13

Not long ago, I received an invitation in the mail. Now to be sure, this is not unusual. My family and I often receive numerous invitations to a variety of events. However, this invitation invited me to a "gala event." I'm still not sure just what a "gala event" is. I was unable to attend.

Many years ago, I received a different type of invitation. My Lord invited me to commune with him through the medium of prayer. It was an invitation I gladly accepted.

Today's lesson invites us all to a lifestyle of prayer. We notice in this lesson . . .

I. The Pleading (v. 1). Luke calls our attention to the fact that one of the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray. This particular disciple must have been moved by the practice of private prayer by Jesus. What a wonderful example for all of us. If "the only begotten Son of God" found time to enter into prayer with his Father, how much more should we?

The disciple had a desire to experience a new type of prayer life. The public prayers of the synagogue style of worship were fine, but they were no longer adequate for his new life with Christ.

Our plea should be that we would learn to

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pray as Christ prayed.

II. The Persistence (vv. 5-8). In these verses, Jesus teaches the need for persistence. He chooses to use one of his favorite methods of teaching a parable. In this parable, the hearers learn the invaluable truth that persistence in prayer is an act of faith on their part, thus on our part as well. It's not that God is reluctant to answer, rather we must not lose faith when the Father chooses not to answer when and how we want him to. We must continue to persist in our prayer life on a daily basis. We must continue to ask that the will of God become known to all men.

III. The Present Tense of Prayer (vv. 9-10). The imperatives "ask, seek, knock" are accepted as being in the present tense. The one that is asking (praying) must keep on asking, keep on seeking, keep on knocking. You and I must continue in our prayers, knowing that a just and righteous God hears.

IV. The Promise (vv. 11-13). Christ concludes this parable by paralleling an earthly father with the Heavenly Father. Obviously, the earthly father is no match for God in knowing how to give good gifts, or in Luke's case, the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus explains that even with all of our evils, we basically try to be good to our children. Now he contrasts that to the fact that God in his in-

finite goodness will give much better gifts to his children.

The promise of the Holy Spirit is considered by Luke to be the consummate gift of God to

his children. When you and I accept the invitation to pray, we accept holy communication with the greatest gift Giver of all.

Dobson is pastor of Collins Church, Collins.

Baptist pastor leads in service for Beatrice Routh

"Beatrice Louise Routh was remembered Thursday (Aug. 15) as a 10-year-old without a home but who had a big heart," Jerry Mitchell, Clarion-Ledger staff writer, began an article about the candlelight vigil held as a memorial to the slain child.

A Baptist preacher, John Landrum, pastor of Popp's Ferry Church, Biloxi, spoke at the service in Jones Park, where Beatrice was abducted Aug. 1. "Beatrice has become more than somebody's child on the Gulf Coast," said Landrum.

"Now she is our child and not some homeless girl. We need to make sure it never, ever happens in our area again," he told the 100 in attendance.

Looking for You, a missing children's organization, sponsored the vigil. Paula Evans, director of the organization, said family members described Beatrice as a "jokester. No matter how down people were, she would smile. Beatrice means to make one smile."

In a service of children's songs, prayer, and music, those gathered sang "This Little Light of Mine" and "Jesus Loves Me."

A picture of Beatrice was displayed, surrounded by pink and white flowers. "The 10 roses represent the 10 previous years she lived on this earth," said James Black, pastor of the Faith Tabernacle of Praise in Biloxi.

Landrum closed by telling the crowd that Beatrice was no longer homeless. "She now has a permanent home with a permanent address and that place is with Jesus," he said.

capsules

ASTRONAUT/MINISTER DIES: GLENWOOD SPRINGS, Colo. (BP) — Astronaut James Irwin, remembered for his scripture quote during an Apollo moon trip and for his unsuccessful search for Noah's Ark, died Aug. 9 of an apparent heart attack. A Southern Baptist and retired Air Force colonel, Irwin, 61, died at his home in Glenwood Springs, Colo. He suffered at least one earlier heart attack, following his trip to the moon in the Apollo 15 flight of 1971. In 1971 he had joined Nassau Bay Church, Houston, near the Johnson Space Center, where he was ordained as a minister of the gospel. He founded High Flight International, an interdenominational evangelistic organization based in Colorado Springs, Colo., in 1972. "My life will never be the same because I saw earth as God must see it," Irwin explained during a prayer breakfast in 1981. He led an expedition in 1982 to Mount Ararat in Turkey in a search for the biblical Noah's Ark but did not find any evidence of it on the 16,946-foot peak. Irwin is survived by his wife, Mary Ellen, five children, his mother, and a brother.

CALL FOR PRAYER AND FASTING FOR SOVIETS URGED BY BWA: WASHINGTON (BP) — A call for prayer and fasting for the Soviet people has been issued by the leadership of the Baptist World Alliance following the unsuccessful military coup in the U.S.S.R. this week. BWA leaders asked for prayer and fasting on Sunday, Aug. 25 and Sept. 1 in churches of the 37 million member body representing Baptists in more than 200 countries. In calling Baptists to prayer and fasting, BWA leaders rejoiced in the return to power of President Gorbachev. The leaders asked prayer for: bloodshed and civil war be avoided, stability restored, "glasnost" and "perestroika" continue to grow, the Soviet economy to prosper, a "new sense of democracy in all areas of Soviet life" including human rights, free press and media, continued growth of religious freedom, boldness for believers to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and all believers worldwide will take seriously their responsibility for reconciliation, peace, and love in the world.

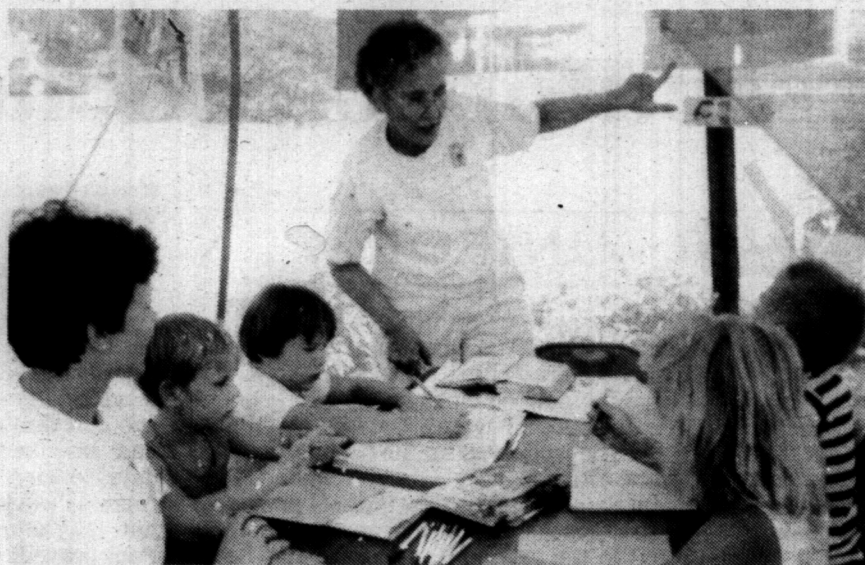
BAPTIST MEN'S CLEANUP, FEEDING CREWS CONTINUE STORM RESPONSE: SWANSEA, Mass. (BP) — Brotherhood Commission disaster relief officials in Memphis, Tenn., have responded to a request from the American Red Cross and activated the Ohio and Kentucky Brotherhood Mobile Feeding Units in the wake of Hurricane Bob. The Kentucky feeding unit arrived today (Aug. 21) at the Bay Community Baptist Church in Swansea, Mass., in suburban Providence, R.I. The Swansea site will serve as the headquarters for eight satellite feeding units. Bob Simpkins, director of Brotherhood for the Kentucky Baptist Convention and on-site leader, said up to 35 volunteers are expected to work out of Swansea.

BAPTISTS WELL-REPRESENTED IN NEW SOVIET BIBLE SOCIETIES: MOSCOW, USSR — Baptists in the Soviet Union play a leading role in the work of the new Bible societies which have been formed or are in the process of being formed within the Soviet Union. The persons who serve in the capacities of vice-president, executive director and treasurer of the Bible Society of the Soviet Union (BSSU) are all Baptists. The president or director of the Bible Societies in Byelorussia, the Ukraine, Moldavia, and Latvia are all prominent Baptist believers. Other Baptists serve on the Boards of the various Bible Societies in the USSR. According to one Bible Society official, Baptists play an integrative role. They represent the middle ground to which both Pentecostals and Orthodox can and do relate. — EBPS.

"ETHICAL ISSUES IN HEALTHCARE," a workshop sponsored by Mississippi Baptist Medical Center, Jackson, will be offered Sept. 5, from 8 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. This program will provide an introduction to current ethical issues in healthcare. The fee is \$30 for MBMC employees, \$35 for groups of three or more from the same organization, and \$45 for other registrants. The workshop is presented by Donald Anderson, Ph.D., the executive director of the Ecumenical Center for Religion and Health in San Antonio. Anderson will also present a workshop for critical care nurses on "Ethical Issues in Critical Care" on Sept. 4, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The fee is \$35. Call 968-1712 to register or to receive more information.

ALASKA PASTOR HONORED FOR SERVICE TO SMALL CHURCHES: GLORIETA, N.M. (BP) — Isolation has been part of Earl Midkiff's life for more than 20 years, but he isn't complaining. The 60-year-old Texas native recently completed his second decade as pastor of First Church of Petersburg, Alaska. The church of fewer than 100 members is located on a remote island with no road connections to the outside world. So every trip away from home, even to a meeting of the "local" Baptist association, requires an airplane or boat ride. Midkiff was honored for that devotion Aug. 4 at Bible-Preaching-Administration Week at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center. He was recognized as the Southern Baptist Convention's Small Church Pastor of the Year for the West. The award was presented by Joe Stacker, director of the Sunday School Board's Church Administration Department. The Small Church Pastor of the Year Award for the East was presented to Doug Benningfield, pastor of Hickory Valley Church in Sparta, Tenn., during the Bible-Preaching-Administration Conference held at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center in July.

LEADING NEW TESTAMENT SCHOLAR DELIVERING DRUMWRIGHT LECTURES: FORT WORTH, Texas — One of the world's leading New Testament scholars will deliver the 4th annual Huber L. Drumwright Lectures Oct. 23-25 at Southwestern Seminary. R. T. France will give the lectures, which are being held in conjunction with the seminary's pastors' conference. France's topic will be "Jesus and the Kingdom of God according to Mark." The lectures will be given at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. Oct. 24 and at 10 a.m. Oct. 25. The lectures are based on France's latest book, *Divine Government: God's Kingship in the Gospel of Mark*. France has served as vice principal and professor of biblical studies at London Bible College; visiting lecturer at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School; and senior lecturer in Christian religious studies at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaire, Nigeria.



Ollie Cobb, left, and Mildred Wiggins, right, teachers, share with first and second graders in VBS under the tent, at Bushnell, Illinois.

Lowndes County team repairs chapel in Bushnell, Illinois

A team consisting of 21 representing four churches in Lowndes County Association worked in Bushnell, Ill., July 13-20, at the recently purchased Bushnell Baptist Chapel, which was in need of repairs.

The team consisted of both men and women who were willing to tackle some unusual tasks. They had an electrician and a carpenter in the group; but the rest were willing gofers.

The job consisted of repairing the roof which had broken rafters and was about to fall in; replacing a basement wall which was built from clay tile in 1927 was about to cave in; replacing an electric panel from 60 amps to 150 amps; installing a hot water heater; remodeling the bathroom and the pastor's study. The women conducted a Vacation Bible School under tents in back of the building.

There were no blocklayers to be found; but some of the team willingly accepted the challenge, before the week was over the wall was torn out

and replaced, the bathroom and pastor's study was remodeled.

Those involved in the project were Woodrow and Pat Chism, Floyd and Ruth Land, Quinn Parham from Antioch Church; Elaine Taylor, Gene and Dot Gillis, Fred and Mae Price from Fairview Church; Carlene Dodson from Community Church; Bobby and Ollie Cobb, Gene and Ann Jones, Tommy and Mildred Wiggins, James and Helena Allen, Larry and Kathy Wright from Border Springs Church.

Even though only four churches had representatives going, a large number of churches contributed materials and supplies for the Bible school. Girls In Action collected materials. Boys and girls attending the VBS at Antioch Church designated their offering and VBS materials to be used at Bushnell Chapel.

A number of children at the VBS at the Bushnell Baptist Chapel prayed to receive Jesus as their Saviour.



Larry Wright makes a measurement before he cuts braces to repair broken rafters of Bushnell Chapel.

North Delta Association sponsors singles revival

North Delta Association sponsored a singles revival the weekend of July 12-14 at First Church, Tunica. Twenty-three churches were represented in those who attended.

Preaching services were held Friday and Saturday nights. A special breakfast for singles took place Saturday morning, followed by four mini-conferences. Then the WMU served lunch at the church for the singles. On Saturday afternoon, a singles swimming party and barbecue were highlights.

Though no decisions were registered on Friday and Saturday nights, five persons who had attended the

revival made public professions of faith in Christ on Sunday morning in their individual churches, according to Ann Owens, singles director, North Delta Association.

Stan Fornea, pastor, First Church, Cleveland, preached; Martin Bell of Jackson led the singing; Beth Pepper of Edwards sang. Dennis Trull is pastor of First Church, Tunica.

"We got a good response to this meeting," said Owens. "I am still getting cards and letters. Those who write say this was a good time for them, and they want to hold a similar meeting again next year."

Pastor turns reunion into opportunity

By Sarah Zimmerman

ATLANTA (BP) — As a Mississippi pastor prepared for his 10-year high school reunion, he mailed New Testaments to more than 350 of his classmates.

"I wanted them to know that Christ is still the one who can make a difference in your life," said Greg Martin, pastor of Commission Road Church in Long Beach, Miss.

Martin became a Christian at the end of his sophomore year at Hixson High School near Chattanooga, Tenn. Though he attended church before he became a Christian, Martin said he lived as a hypocrite.

At age 10 he was arrested for shoplifting. At 13, he was caught breaking into cars. "I went from one bad crowd to another," he said.

Martin was working as a bookie at a race track in the spring semester of his sophomore year when he became convicted about his sin.

He knew he needed to pray for forgiveness and salvation.

That summer, a youth worker at his church taught Martin what it means to follow Christ. When Martin began his junior year in high school, he was a different person.

This year, he wanted people attending his high school reunion to know the changes Christ made in his life were lasting.

Martin found the addresses of more than 350 of the 400-plus members of his graduating class. He sent each of them a New Testament and a letter.

Martin was anxious about people's response as he attended the reunion. But he said about 50 people thanked him for the New Testament, and no one said anything negative about his gesture.

Most gratifying to Martin were the letters he received. One man told Martin he read the New Testament when he couldn't sleep at night.

A woman who had been through a bitter divorce called the New Testament the "loveliest gift I have received in a long time." Another letter was from the high school's star football player who told Martin he wanted to discuss the claims of Christ.

Martin hopes that by his 20th high school reunion, he will see the benefits of his classmates reading the gift they received this year.

Zimmerman writes for HMB.

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